

**Higher Education in a Globalised Market:
A Comparative Discourse Study of University Prospectuses
in Hong Kong and the United Kingdom**

9416184

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Abstract

The globalization of higher education has been greatly accelerated in the 21st century. International student recruitment not only enriches cultural diversity but also provides huge revenue to education providers. This study is a written discourse analysis of the introductory pages of university prospectuses in the two culturally distinct institutional contexts of Hong Kong and the United Kingdom.

Applying Bhatia's (1993) model of applied genre analysis, a five-move generic structure has been identified in 14 selected introductory pages which display evidence of interdiscursivity "with elements of advertising and other promotional genres" (Fairclough, 1993: 146). The introductory pages are established as a hybrid promotional genre sharing a recognisable set of three communicative purposes: persuading, welcoming and informing. Halliday's (1994) functional grammar approach is adopted to closely examine how the introductory pages represent the experimental and interpersonal metafunctions of language by analysing the grammar of clauses (with a focus on transitivity) and allocation of social roles (with a focus on personal pronouns).

Although there are variations shown in move structures, promotional strategies and linguistic and multimodal resources, both Hong Kong and British universities tend to maintain a common institutional role and most irregularities are due to "organisational differences" (Bhatia, 1999: 27). Individual universities push out the generic boundaries to fulfil private intentions so as to stand out from their regional or international counterparts.

It is hoped that the recommendations for writing prospectuses can be applied effectively and extended to other related advertising genres to help universities and international educational organisation produce better promotional texts which target their intended audience.

Declaration

I have read and understood The University of Edinburgh guidelines on Plagiarism and declare that this written dissertation is all my own work except where I indicate otherwise by proper use of quotes and references.

Kin Lam HUI

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This is a comparative discourse study of university prospectuses in Hong Kong and the United Kingdom (UK) with a focus on written texts. In this introductory chapter, I will explain how my interest in public discourse of higher education has developed; outline my research questions and the analytical frameworks used; and describe the research context of global marketisation of higher education, with particular references to Hong Kong and the UK.

1.1 Background

The globalisation of higher education has been greatly accelerated because of increased geographical mobility and the wide spread of English as the language of business and education. International education not only enriches cultural diversity and enhances the capacity for research and innovations, but also brings huge financial benefits to the countries which provide education. Competition in the market of international education is therefore fierce. While the United States of America (USA) and the UK are the two global leaders (British Council, 2008: 1), an increasing number of developed countries, especially English-speaking ones, have entered the market to recruit international students and enjoy a share of the cake.

Research into higher education shows that there has been a global shift “from collegial to managerial forms of university governance” (Mok, 1999: 134). Mok (1999: 134) observes that “the strong market forces have caused institutions of higher learning to re-orient themselves to be more sensitive to market needs”, resulting in “a different use of language in the educational sphere”. For example, students are treated as “clients or customers”; admissions are “about access instead of selection”; and courses and curricula are “market-driven” and stress “practical and applied value” (Mok, 1999: 134). Furthermore, Kwong (2000: 89-90) points out that “the traditional view that advertising is inappropriate and unbecoming to education” has been

abandoned, and universities, like business firms, now “package and advertise their offerings in both printed and electronic media to attract clients” and “increase sales and the profit margin”.

1.2 Analytical Frameworks

My interest in the marketisation of public discourse was first stimulated by the works of Fairclough (1993, 1995). Fairclough is a leading discourse analyst working in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and interdisciplinary studies of discursive aspects of social and cultural change. Fairclough (1993: 134) views language use as a form of social practice, implying that:

it is always a socially and historically situated mode of action, in a dialectical relationship with other facets of ‘the social’ (its ‘social context’) – it is socially shaped, but it is also socially shaping, or *constitutive*.

To explore these two sides of language use, Fairclough (1993) drew on a three-dimensional framework to analyse four texts produced by British universities in the early 1990s – press advertisements for academic posts, programme materials for an academic conference, an academic curriculum vitae and entries in undergraduate prospectuses – to examine how the discursive practices of higher education were “in the process of being transformed through the increasing salience within higher education of promotion as a communicative function” (Fairclough, 1993: 143). In his analytical framework, each discursive event has three dimensions:

1. It is a spoken or written language *text*,
2. It is an instance of *discourse practice* involving the production and interpretation of text, and
3. It is a piece of *social practice* (Fairclough, 1993: 136).

Text and social practice are connected when they are being mediated by discourse practice, as:

on the one hand, processes of text production and interpretation are shaped by (and help shape) the nature of the social practice, and on the other hand the production process shapes (and leaves ‘traces’ in) the text, and the interpretative process operates upon ‘cues’ in the text (Fairclough, 1993: 136).

One important feature of his analytical framework is the combination of “a theory of power based upon Gramsci’s concept of *hegemony*” and “a theory of discourse practice based upon the concept of intertextuality (more exactly, *interdiscursivity*)” (Fairclough, 1993: 136). The term *interdiscursivity* is defined by Fairclough (1993: 138) as “the constitution of a text from diverse discourses and genres”, and the concept can be traced back to the works of Foucault (1972) and Bakhtin (1986).

It is the complexity of interdiscursivity shown in the work of Fairclough (1993) which interests me and has inspired me to undertake a comparative text-based analysis to examine how universities in Hong Kong and the UK make use of interdiscursivity in prospectuses to perform a range of communicative functions in the 21st century. As a recent graduate of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) and a current postgraduate student at the University of Edinburgh, I have a personal interest as well as a useful familiarity with the two research contexts. In addition, I have the experience of reading extensively university prospectuses from these two regions when selecting my postgraduate programme in Applied Linguistics in 2008.

My interest in interdiscursivity of public discourse and my familiarity with university promotional materials have led me to ask the following three research questions:

1. What are the generic structure and recognisable communicative functions of introductory pages in university prospectuses?
2. How is language constructed to reveal social roles and relationships between the two main participants – the university and prospective students – in order to achieve a shared set of communicative goals?
3. Are there any systemic textual and discursive variations between the universities in Hong Kong and those in the UK?

To address the first question, I have drawn on Bhatia's (1993) applied genre analysis with an emphasis on Swales' (1990: 58) definition of the term *genre*:

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognised by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style.

In short, Swales (1990: 45) sees genre as a “communicative vehicle for the achievement of goals”. Bhatia (1993: 45) selected two different communicative events - sales promotional letters and job application letters - from the business world, analysed them as instances of the same genre and concluded that a shared set of communicative purposes is “the most important factor in genre identification”. Therefore, the notion of “communicative purposes” (Swales, 1990: 58) is adopted in my study.

For the second question, my analysis of the grammar of clauses to examine social relationships between the two main participants is based on Halliday's (1994) theory of functional grammar which construes all units of a language as organic configurations of functions (Halliday, 1994: xiv) and is designed to account for how language is used “to understand the environment (ideational)” and “to act on the others in it (interpersonal)” (Halliday, 1994: xiii).

To answer the third question by comparing and contrasting the texts, it is essential to understand the institutional contexts of Hong Kong and the UK before exploring the relationship between the textual interaction and the social context.

1.3 Research Contexts

In the UK, international education exports generate an estimated £12.5 billion per annum, and international student recruitment is estimated to be worth £8.5 billion per annum to the UK economy (British Council, 2008: 1). In 1999, the then Prime

Minister, Tony Blair, launched the first phase of the Prime Minister's Initiative for International Education (PMI) which exceeded its target and successfully recruited 118,000 non-European (non-EU) international students in five years (British Council, 2008: 2). The five-year second phase of the Initiative (PMI2) was launched in 2006, and aims to "attract an additional 70,000 international students", "promote the benefits of a UK education" and "diversify and consolidate markets" (British Council, 2009). According to the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) (2009), the top ten sending countries in the academic year 2007-2008¹ are China, India, Ireland, the USA, Germany, France, Greece, Nigeria, Malaysia and Hong Kong.

Unlike the UK which targets at a wider range of countries including Hong Kong as one of its priority markets (British Council, 2009), Hong Kong aims to "fortify [its] status as a regional educational hub" (Hong Kong SAR Government, 2007: 92). Hong Kong has attracted an increasing number of international students by increasing the admission quotas for non-local students from 10% to 20%; setting up the HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund; and relaxing the employment restrictions imposed on non-local students and graduates (University Grants Committee, 2009a). According to University Grants Commission (UGC) (2009b), there were 8,320 non-local students in Hong Kong in 2008-2009. Compared with the figures in the previous two academic years, there has been a consistent annual increase of about 10% in the total number of international students. However, there are concerns about the cultural diversity of the Hong Kong universities. One education advisor has noted that "local universities were already accepting too many mainland [Chinese] students (who make up 94 percent of non-local students) while only 4 percent came from other Asian countries and less than 2 percent came from Western countries" (Chong, 2006).

¹ The list combines the results of top non-EU sending countries and those of top EU sending countries.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I will review studies of public discourse in higher education, including Fairclough's (1993, 1995) research into university prospectuses, Askehave's (2007) research into international student prospectuses and two studies of other university genres.

2.1 Discourse Analysis of University Prospectuses

2.1.1 Research into University Prospectuses: Fairclough (1993, 1995)

One of Fairclough's (1993: 139) prominent findings is that "advertising and promotional discourse have colonised many new domains of life in contemporary societies". He compared the 1967-1968 entry in an undergraduate prospectus with the 1993 entry and suggested that the latter is "an interdiscursively hybrid quasi-advertising genre" as:

the 1967-68 entry gives information about what is provided on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. In the 1993 prospectus, by contrast, the promotional function is primary; it is designed to 'sell' the university and its courses to potential applicants, in the context of a competitive market where the capacity of a university to attract good applicants is seen as one indicator of its success (Fairclough, 1993: 156).

In addition, he observed striking differences in physical appearance between the earlier entry and the 1993 entry. While the former is based on "the conventional printed page", the latter draws on "visual and design features widely used in advertising and promotional material" such as "a brochure-style page size", "three print-columns per page", "colour" and "tabular layout and a photograph" (Fairclough, 1993: 156).

In his 1995 paper, Fairclough (1995: 107) addresses the dilemmas faced by academics which are originated from “the contradiction between a traditional professional- (or producer-) orientated relationship” and “a ‘consumer-orientated’ relationship being forced upon universities by the economic position they have been placed in”. On the one hand, the university is “the ‘authoritor’ admitting or rejecting applicants according to its criteria for entry”; on the other hand, the applicant is also “the authoritor choosing (as consumers do) among the range of goods on offer” (Fairclough, 1995: 107). He points out that the heterogeneity of speech functions – informing, regulating and persuading – is reflected in the heterogeneity of semiotic modalities and genres in the text, in which university prospectuses attempt a “balancing act” between a discursive practice of providing information about courses and a discursive practice of ‘selling’ courses (Fairclough, 1995: 107).

2.1.2 Research into International Student Prospectuses: Askehave (2007)

Inspired by the work of Fairclough (1993, 1995, 2001), Askehave (2007) also investigated the marketisation of higher education from the CDA perspective. In the first part of her research, Askehave used a text-driven procedure for genre analysis proposed by Askehave and Swales (2001) to establish genre membership and characteristics to analyse the overall structure, content and rhetorical moves of four international student prospectuses collected from universities in Australia, Finland, Japan and Scotland. As Table 1 shows, Askehave identified six obligatory moves which provide core information and 12 additional moves which appeared in some but not all prospectuses.

Table 1: Move structure analysis of four international student prospectuses (Askehave, 2007: 728)

Obligatory moves	Additional moves
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of sender • Description of university • Description of courses/degrees • Description of destination (university city, nearest largest city, region or country) • Providing practical information – fast facts (health, cost of living, fees, accommodation, application, admission criteria) ² • Providing contact information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission statement • Welcoming remark • Description of brochure contents • Description of study abroad opportunities for ‘own’ students • Description of teaching and learning methods • Description of accommodation • Description of campus facilities • Description of admission criteria • Providing application details • Description of student support measures and facilities • Description of location (maps) • Closing remark

In the second half, Askehave (2007) drew on Halliday’s (1985) theory of metafunctions of language in functional grammar to analyse how the university and prospective students are presented in the prospectus of the University of Stirling, Scotland. She focused on the experiential metafunction (which constructs a model of experience in the text) and the interpersonal metafunction (which enacts social relationships between the writer and the audience) (Halliday, 1994: 36). Her findings on lexico-grammar as well as layout and design concur with Fairclough’s (1993: 143) conclusion that “institutions of higher education come increasingly to operate as if they were ordinary businesses competing to sell their products to consumers”. Furthermore, Askehave (2007: 739) notes that the university extends its traditional ambit as an education provider to offer “an interesting and challenging university

² Askehave (2007: 740) points out that accommodation, admission criteria and application appear as separate moves in some of the prospectuses.

‘experience’ to meet the needs of the picky student who is spoiled for choice”. The “experience” was as much a selling point as the programmes offered.

2.2 Discourse Analysis of Other University Genres

Previous research into university prospectuses is rather limited in the field of discourse analysis, but some research has been conducted into the discursive practices concerning the marketisation of higher education by analysing other genres such as academic mission statements (Connell and Galasinski, 1998) and brochures (Osman, 2008). I will briefly outline these two studies which display some interesting features which are relevant to this study.

2.2.1 Research into Academic Mission Statements: Connell and Galasinski (1998)

Connell and Galasinski (1998: 463) analysed, with critical linguistic tools, the academic mission statements produced by 146 Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in the UK in the late 1990s to “identify the main ways in which Statements constructed an ordered and purposeful educational reality”. Focusing on overall structures, grammar and vocabulary, they found evidence that the statements did not always “present academic affairs as ‘business-like’” and concluded that they “both acknowledged *and* negotiated the political-ideological context” (Connell and Galasinski, 1998: 476). In their corpus, although core academic affairs were still represented as they had always been represented, some universities “made lexical concessions to what may be regarded as commercial discourses”, for example, students were sometimes referred to as *client(s)/clientele* and *customer(s)*.

2.2.2 Research into University Brochures: Osman (2008)

Osman’s (2008) study is more relevant to my research as it involves a genre analysis. Focusing on the corporatisation of public universities in Malaysia in the late 1990s, Osman (2008: 61) examined the strategies, or “tactical choices” (Bhatia, 1993), employed in brochures collected from 11 Malaysian public universities and analysed them as “a corporate genre in academic institutions”. Osman (2008: 62-63) identified

ten moves which were used to achieve three common communicative functions: to inform the public, to portray a corporate image of the university and to promote the university. Table 2 lists the six obligatory moves and four optional moves found in her corpus.

Table 2: Move structure analysis of university brochures of 11 Malaysian public universities (Osman, 2008: 62-63)

Section	Move Identification	Obligatory/ Optional
1. Name of the university	Identifying the service ³	Obligatory
2. University slogan or motto	Attracting reader attention	Optional
3. Vision/Mission statement	Targeting the market	Optional
4. Profile or background of the university	Establishing credentials	Obligatory
5. Location and size of the university	Locating the service	Obligatory
6. Academic programmes offered at the university	Describing the service	Obligatory
7. Facilities available to support the academic programmes	Justifying the service	Obligatory
8. Entry requirements, fees charged and duration of the programmes	Indicating the value of service	Optional
9. Career opportunities and recognition received by the university	Endorsing the value of service	Optional
10. Contact addresses and telephone numbers	Soliciting response	Obligatory

Osman (2007: 70-71) concluded that the Malaysian public universities “[function] as corporations and [have become] more market-oriented and competitive in attracting

³ The term *service* is defined by Osman (2008: 62) as “the educational services and the support services offered by the universities”.

their consumers”. Osman (2008: 71) thought that the third communicative function – to promote the university – had surpassed the other two functions.

2.3 Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed four studies of the marketisation of higher educational discourse in the UK (§ 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.2.1) and other parts of the world (§ 2.1.2 and 2.2.2) which firmly establish university prospectuses, academic mission statements and brochures as hybrid promotional genres. As Bhatia (1999: 25) notes, “it is becoming almost a standard practice to mix promotional elements with more information-giving genres” in public discourse.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology and Approaches

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I will describe the criteria for data selection and the method of data collection for my corpus; and give an account of the research methods on which this study is based.

3.1 Criteria for Data Selection: Introductory Pages

In compiling the corpus, I have chosen university prospectuses from a diverse range of university publications, because Askehave's (2007: 727) says that prospectuses are "a truly international genre and deserve to be compared cross-culturally". The word *prospectus* is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as "a brochure detailing or *advertising* the facilities or activities of a school, university, or other educational institution" (my italics). In addition, as Goddard (2002: 101) says, university prospectuses can be classified as advertisements as they are not only information texts but always have a "corporate perspective" and a "conscious intention" behind them. The advertising nature of university prospectuses thus enables me to answer my research questions concerning interdiscursivity with a focus on "elements of advertising and other promotional genres" (Fairclough, 1993: 146). I have therefore conducted a comparative discourse study to examine how universities in Hong Kong and the UK make use of interdiscursivity – similarly or differently – to perform a range of communicative functions.

However, due to the rich content of university prospectuses and the scale of this study, I do not aim to analyse every section of the prospectuses (cf Askehave (2007) and Osman (2008)). Instead, I have limited my corpus to only the introductory pages which appear within the first three pages of the prospectuses⁴ and are often in the form of a welcoming remark, an introduction, an overview or a foreword or message

⁴ The only exception is the front inside cover of the prospectus collected from the University of Edinburgh.

from university leaders. The reasons for my choice are that, firstly, introductory pages are probably one of the sections most readers will read, as prospectuses are “likely to be flicked through rather than carefully read” (Fairclough, 1993: 156); and, secondly, introductory pages are often the first point of contact prospective students have with the university and also an anchor for the remaining parts of the prospectus. In terms of the discourse of advertising, they can act as “sales promotional letters” to “establish the first link between a potential seller and a prospective customer” and “[initiate] business relations between the two parties” (Bhatia, 1993: 46).

3.2 Method of Data Collection

The fourteen chosen universities in my corpus are listed in Table 3, and a detailed summary of the 14 introductory pages can be found in Appendix 1 (pp. 66-69) and the full corpus in Appendix 2 (pp. 70-87). The short forms of the university names (e.g. CityU and Durham) are shown in brackets in Table 3 and will be used in the remaining chapters.

Table 3: List of the 14 universities in the corpus

(The full names are listed in alphabetical order.)

Hong Kong	The UK
1. City University of Hong Kong (CityU)	1. Durham University (Durham)
2. Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU)	2. Imperial College London (Imperial)
3. Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)	3. Oxford Brookes University (Brookes)
4. Lingnan University (Lingnan)	4. Queen’s University Belfast (Queen’s)
5. The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK)	5. The University of Edinburgh (Edinburgh)
6. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU)	6. UCL (UCL)
7. The University of Hong Kong (HKU)	7. University of Oxford (Oxford)

In March and April 2009, I collected university prospectuses for postgraduate students for entry in the academic year 2009-2010 from these 14 universities by the following means:

Table 4: Means of collecting prospectuses

Means	Universities
1. By ordering a printed prospectus (whenever possible) via email or through the official university website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HKUST • HKU • Durham • Imperial • Brookes • Edinburgh • UCL • Oxford
2. By downloading a prospectus in the PDF format from the official university website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CUHK • Queen's
3. By accessing an online prospectus at the official university website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityU • HKBU⁵, • Lingnan • PolyU

I have included all seven public universities in Hong Kong. HKUST, CUHK and HKU rank top 50 of the Top 200 World University List (Times Higher Education (THE), 2008). To obtain a more balanced set of data, I have also selected seven universities in the UK including five in England, one in Scotland and one in Northern Ireland. Edinburgh, UCL and Oxford also rank top 50 on the THE's list. To make my UK data more representative, I have chosen Imperial, Edinburgh, UCL and Oxford, as they are among the "top 20 largest recruiters of international students" in 2007-2008,

⁵ HKBU publishes a printed prospectus but does not offer overseas delivery service, so I used the online prospectus instead.

ranging from 20% to 39% of international students in each university (UKCISA, 2009).

3.3 Analytical Approaches

The CDA perspective is adopted in this study. The three stages of CDA are description of text, interpretation of the relationship of text and social context and an explanation of the relationship between interaction and social context. This approach allows me to answer my research questions with reference to the sociocultural context of Hong Kong and the UK. As van Dijk (2001: 96) points out, CDA “is not a method, nor a theory that simply can be applied to social problems”, but it “can be conducted in, and combined with, any approach and subdiscipline in the humanities and the social sciences”. This flexibility offered by the CDA has proved very useful in this study as each research question has a different analytical focus and requires a different approach.

To answer the first question “Why is the genre of introductory pages written the way it is?”, I have conducted an applied genre analysis based on Bhatia’s (1993) model which “characterise[s] typical or conventional textual features of the genre-specific texts” and, more importantly, “explain[s] such a characterisation in the context of the socio-cultural as well as the cognitive constraints operating in the relevant area of professional specialisation”.

To answer the second question, I have conducted - using Halliday’s (1994) functional grammar approach - a qualitative analysis of the grammar of the clause (with a focus on transitivity) and personal pronouns. Halliday views language in the model of field (ideational), tenor (interpersonal) and mode (textual):

1. Ideational function: To communicate about events and processes in the world, and the entities involved in these;
2. Interpersonal function: To express a speaker’s attitude to these propositions, and to express a speaker’s perceived relation with an interlocutor;
3. Textual function: To present these in coherent, adequate and appropriate texture (Halliday, 1976:19-25).

With Halliday's (1994: 36) functional approach, formal features can be analysed according to the following four metafunctions:

Table 5: Halliday's theory of metafunctions of language

Metafunction	Definition (Kind of meaning)
1. Experiential	Construing a model of experience
2. Interpersonal	Enacting social relationships
3. Textual	Creating relevance to context
4. Logical	Constructing logical relations

Functional grammar approach is used in this study because it is functional “in the sense that it is designed to account for how the language is used” when “each element in a language is explained by reference to its function in the total linguistic system” (Halliday, 1994: xiii-xiv). This approach is useful for me to investigate how the grammar of clause and personal pronouns condition attitudes to each other and to the institutional and sociocultural setting (Halliday, 2002: 382-383).

The applied genre analysis also helps answer the third question in addressing any cross-cultural variations found in the first and second research questions. As Bhatia (1993: 38) suggests, it is very likely that “local cultural constraints” will have “interesting implications for the realisation of certain moves and even the way certain non-discriminative strategies are employed to accomplish specific intentions”, even if they do not usually affect the essential move-structure of a particular genre.

I have also analysed the layout and design of introductory pages from the multimodal perspective. Multimodality is defined by Kress and van Leeuwen (2001: 20) as “the use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event, together with the particular way in which these modes are combined”, including colourful photographs, sophisticated layouts, media as well as typographical and graphological devices. It should be noted that, although I have devoted a section to discuss variations in multimodality (see § 6.2), the focus of my analysis remains the linguistic evidence found in the texts.

Chapter 4

Applied Genre Analysis of Introductory Pages

4.0 Introduction

Applying Bhatia's (1993) model of applied genre analysis, I have analysed the overall structure and content of the introductory pages to identify a five-move generic structure. I have also identified the common communicative functions performed by the texts. Swales' (2004) definition of a move is adopted in this study. He sees a move as "a discoursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in a written or spoken discourse" (Swales, 2004: 228), that is "a functional, not formal, unit" because "at one extreme, it can be realised by a clause; at the other by several sentences" (Swales, 2004: 229). It is worth pointing out that while moves are "discriminative element[s] of generic structure", the term *strategy* refers to non-discriminative options (Bhatia, 1993: 32).

In this chapter, I will give linguistic evidence and describe the five individual moves employed by the fourteen universities to achieve their common goals, as each move "serves a typical communicative intention which is always subservient to the overall communicative purpose of the genre" (Bhatia, 1993: 30).

4.1 Overall Move Structure

Table 6 shows the five-move generic structure of the fourteen introductory pages in my corpus.

Table 6: Move structure analysis of introductory pages in the corpus

Move 1	Welcoming
Move 2	Establishing Credentials <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Name of universityb) Historyc) International recognition/Rankingd) Location/Descriptions related to destinatione) Teaching stafff) Other (unique) selling points
Move 3	Offering Postgraduate Programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Providing essential details (e.g. fields, specialisation, modes of studies)b) Indicating the value
Move 4	Offering “Extra” Services <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Providing essential details (e.g. academic resources, campus facilities, student services, international student community, accommodation)b) Indicating the value
Move 5	Eliciting Desired Responses <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Appeal for action (i.e. enrolment)b) Facilitating further communication

4.1.1 Move 1: Welcoming

Move 1: Welcoming is generally assigned the opening position and serves as the first point of contact between the university and prospective students. Nine out of fourteen universities (HKBU, HKUST, CUHK, PolyU, HKU, Durham, Queen's, Edinburgh and Oxford) use this move explicitly to welcome prospective students and introduce them to the university.

Table 7: Examples of Move 1: Welcoming

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Message from the Director (Heading) (HKBU)• Welcome to HKUST (HKUST)• Foreword (Heading) (CUHK)• Meet our President (Heading) (PolyU)• A Message from the Vice-Chancellor & President (Heading) (HKU)• By studying in Durham you will become part of an academic community where teaching is directly informed by the world-class research undertaken throughout the University. (Durham)• Welcome to Queen's. / Hello. (Headings) (Queen's)• Welcome. (Heading) / Welcome to Edinburgh. (Closing remark) ((Edinburgh)• Welcome to the University of Oxford Graduate Studies Prospectuses for entry in 2009-2010 (Oxford)

HKUST, Queen's, Edinburgh and Oxford have the word *Welcome* in their headings (e.g. "Welcome to HKUST" (HKUST) and "Welcome to Queen's." (Queen's)). Queen's and Oxford also express gratitude to the interested students in the first paragraph (e.g. "We are delighted that you are considering applying for postgraduate study at the University of Oxford." (Oxford)). Durham firmly identifies the intended readers – students who would like to study at Durham – in the first sentence "By studying at Durham you will" and then begins a friendly dialogue with them.

4.1.2 Move 2: Establishing Credentials

In the globalised market of higher education, Move 2: Establishing Credentials aims to impress the readers with selling points such as university names (more correctly, brand names), traditions, regional and/or international reputation, remarkable achievements, good location and other unique selling points (USPs). In analysing this move, I have identified six sub-moves:

- a) Name of university
- b) History
- c) International recognition/Ranking
- d) Location/Descriptions related to destination
- e) Teaching staff
- f) Other (unique) selling points

The most popular sub-moves are (a) Name of university, (e) Teaching staff and (c) International recognition/Ranking. Although CityU and Lingnan only have one basic Sub-move 1(a), the majority of the universities display three or more sub-moves. HKU shows all the six sub-moves, and HKUST shows five.

In the discourse of advertising, Jordon (1986: 36) suggests that “a great deal of promotional writing [...] relies on convincing readers that they have a problem or need, and the product or service being offered is not just a solution but is also the *best* solution” (my italics). In view of this, Move 2 works at two levels: firstly, by indicating the university’s perception of the interests and needs of prospective students; and secondly, by convincing them that the particular university can satisfy their needs and possesses qualities which make it superior to its regional and/or international counterparts.

It is worth looking at the linguistic representation of the USPs highlighted by individual universities including PolyU, HKU, Durham and Brookes. As USPs are “the kernel of the sales message” (Leech, 1966: 36), they are often linguistically constructed by adjectives in comparative or superlative forms. For example, HKU sees its long age and status as an USP and uses the superlative of the adjective *old* :

“Hong Kong’s oldest tertiary educational institution”. Similarly, PolyU highlights its USP by using the superlative of the adjective *large*: “The Hong Kong Polytechnic University is the largest institution in terms of student numbers”. Oxford uses a “qualified comparative form” (Leech, 1966: 31) to highlight the USP that its staff is not simply better, but better than all its national rivals, as shown in the sentence “The University has *more* academic staff working in world-class research departments (rated 5* and 5 in the 2001 national Research Assessment Exercise) *than any other university in the UK*” (my italics). Durham, however, does not make use of superlatives. Instead, Durham highlights its small size and flexibility as an USP when it comes to changes and developments, as in “Durham is small and flexible enough to develop new approaches to teaching and research ideas which transcend disciplinary boundaries”.

Apart from showcasing tradition and academic excellence, some universities also highlight non-academic USPs, for instance, CUHK’s “experienced administrative staff” and Brookes’ concern for fairtrade and green business as “the world’s first Fairtrade university” and “one of the top green universities”. However, while Brookes draws readers’ attention to the fact that “there’s a buzz around green business in and around Oxford”, the University of Oxford does not mention any green business at all. Another interesting example is that only Queen’s highlights its membership of “the prestigious Russell Group”, although Imperial, Edinburgh, UCL and Oxford are also members of the Russell Group which consists of 20 research-intensive universities in the UK.

I will also discuss the use of present perfect tense in introductory pages. It is a strategy commonly used when referring to continued endeavours and achievements. The continuative perfect and the experiential perfect are the two major uses in my corpus.

Table 8 shows some examples of the continuative perfect whose usage is concerned with ordinary *states*. The default reading of the following sentences is the continuative reading where the situation continues throughout a period beginning in the past and extending up to now (Cambridge, 2002: 141).

Table 8: The continuative perfect

- The Graduate School **has experienced** a significant growth (HKBU)
- We **have upheld** a proud record of funding for research (HKU)
- This reputation **has attracted** talented teachers and students to the University, further enhancing the quality of our research. (HKU)
- Hong Kong **has** always **been** able to rely upon the talents of its people (HKU)
- UCL's academic excellence and innovative approach **have brought** not only international recognition, but also **facilitated** the development of networks and collaborative. (UCL)

Table 9 shows some examples of the experiential perfect whose “connection with now is clearest and most direct when the completion of an *accomplishment* takes place” (Cambridge, 2002: 143) (my italics) (cf state in the continuative use). For example, when a role is identified, a school is established and a university has risen to the front rank. These past situations are represented as having “current relevance” (Cambridge, 2002: 43).

Table 9: The experiential perfect

- The Graduate School of Hong Kong Baptist University **has identified** its role and endeavoured to contribute to the nurture of new talents. (HKBU)
- The University **has established** the Graduate School to further promote our postgraduate programmes and to upgrade the support for postgraduate studies administration. (HKBU)
- The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), established in 1991, **has** rapidly **risen** to be ranked among the world's leading research universities. (HKUST)
- We **have established** a solid reputation for research achievement (HKU)

The present perfect tense is used in these introductory pages (HKBU, HKUST, HKU and UCL) to establish credentials and build readers' confidence in the universities. These universities strongly project a well-established and forward-looking image of the institutions, making connections from the past to the present and from the present to the near future.

4.1.3 Move 3: Offering Postgraduate Programmes

Move 3: Offering Postgraduate Programmes introduces the product or service being promoted, i.e. postgraduate programmes. I have identified two sub-moves:

- a) Providing essential details (e.g. fields, specialisation and modes of studies)
- b) Indicating the value

Almost all universities include Sub-move 3 (a) to provide necessary details of their postgraduate programmes, as shown in Table 10:

Table 10: Examples of Sub-move 3 (a): Providing necessary details of postgraduate programmes

Fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our University offers a wide variety of professional postgraduate programmes, ranging from engineering and business administration, through fashion and design, to social work and healthcare studies. (PolyU)
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have strengths across the arts, humanities, sciences, social sciences and health, with particularly strong international research reputations in Chemistry, Geography, English, Law, Physics, History and Applied Mathematics. (Durham)
Modes of studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPhil and PhD programmes are offered in all Colleges/Schools. (CityU) • Studies can be undertaken full-time or part-time. (CityU)

While Lingnan lists all seven taught postgraduate programmes in full, Brookes and Queen's have minimal references to specific programmes. Brookes only has the heading "Great learning and research", while Queen's lists two section headings "A-Z Research Degree Programmes" and "A-Z of Taught Degree Courses" to guide the readers to the corresponding sections.

All universities except Lingnan and Brookes also have Sub-move (b) to indicate the value of postgraduate programmes. The majority of them clearly indicate to prospective students how a postgraduate degree can be valuable. A diverse range of "rewards" are found in my corpus and shown in Table 11:

Table 11: Examples of Sub-move 3 (b): Indicating the value of postgraduate programmes – the "rewards"

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the acquisition of professional skills with the cultivation of intellectual faculties (CityU) • the chance to experience the excitement and intellectual challenge of contributing to research that can transform the world (HKUST) • a pre-requisite for career and advancement and an edge in advancing their careers (PolyU) • one of the most important keys to success in today's knowledge-based economy (HKU) • becoming part of an academic community where teaching is directly informed by the world-class research undertaken throughout the University (Durham) • experiencing research that is changing the world (Imperial) • specialist skills, unique perspectives and deeper understanding, providing you with all the tools you need to take your career forward, whether it is in industry, academia or beyond (Edinburgh) • the highest quality research opportunities and some exciting and rewarding thinking ahead (Edinburgh) • UCL Advantages (Heading) (UCL) • evidence of your previous academic excellence, and of your future potential (Oxford) |
|--|

These rewards are related to research opportunities (HKUST, Durham and Imperial), career opportunities (PolyU), or both (CityU, HKU, Edinburgh and Oxford). This sub-move works like an advertisement and is designed to arouse readers' interests and make them "more favourably disposed in general terms to the advertised products" (Goddard, 2002: 7).

4.1.4 Move 4: Offering "Extra" Services

The communicative functions of Move 4: Offering "Extra" Services are similar to those of Move 3: Offering Postgraduate Programmes. It also has the same two sub-moves:

- a) Providing essential details (e.g. academic resources, campus facilities, student services, international student community and accommodation)
- b) Indicating the value

As Askehave (2007: 739) suggests, universities now promote "an interesting and challenging university 'experience'" with "extra" services included. Eight of the fourteen universities give information about their "extra" services and indicate their value, as shown in Table 12:

Table 12: Examples of Sub-move 4 (a) Providing essential details of "extra" services and Sub-move 4 (b) Indicating the value

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a scenic, award-winning campus and lively university community (HKUST) • first-class library and computer facilities, fine range of sporting and leisure facilities, residential accommodation and financial assistance in the form of studentships (HKU) • a network of tutors, advisors and counsellors to offer you advice and support during your studies (Imperial) • organisation of social and networking events (UCL) • an interdisciplinary college environment in which graduate students from all over the world have a home base and come into contact with other students from a wide variety of backgrounds and interests (Oxford) |
|--|

The strategy of self-presentation is frequently used in promotional genres because they are useful for presenting “an adequately relevant, positive and credible description of the product or service and a good indication of potential value to its intended audience” (Bhatia, 1993: 66). The value of the “rewards” appears more salient and worthy of attention than the mere description of the university or programme itself. As described above, Move 3 (see § 4.1.3) and Move 4 serve as strategies of “self appraisal” (Bhatia, 1993: 66) and are extensively applied in my corpus.

4.1.5 Move 5: Eliciting Desired Responses

The final move, Move 5: Eliciting Desired Responses is an important move because it appeals to the readers for action, i.e. to apply for a postgraduate programme offered by the university. It has two sub-moves:

- a) Appeal for action (i.e. enrolment)
- b) Facilitating further communication

All but three universities (Durham, Imperial and Brookes) use Sub-move 5 (a) to call for action after convincing the “already inclined or half-inclined” readers of the attractiveness of the offer in Moves 2, 3 and 4 (see § 4.1.2, 4.1.3 and 4.1.4), although no university employs any “pressure tactics” (Bhatia, 1993: 55) to pressure potential students to take an immediate action. This communication function is achieved by the following three means:

**Table 13: Means of achieving the communicative function in Sub-move 5 (a):
Facilitating further communication**

Means	Universities
1. Inviting applications from the intended readers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityU • Lingnan • Oxford
E.g. We want to encourage applications from excellent students from all kinds of backgrounds. (Oxford)	
2. Asking them to join the university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HKBU • HKUST • CUHK • HKU • UCL
E.g. Join us in our pursuit of academic excellence (CUHK)	
3. Conveying the pleasure of expecting to see them soon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PolyU • Queen's • Edinburgh
E.g. We look forward to seeing you around campus. (Queen's)	

Concerning Sub-move 5 (b), only three universities suggest further communication. While Oxford is willing to “[help] you with any further questions which you may have”, CityU and Queen’s provide prospective students with concrete contact details. CityU makes use of the online platform to give two links to the School of Graduate Studies and a direct link to the online prospectus which includes a full list of programmes. Queen’s gives the full contact details of the Admissions and Access Service section, including its postal address, telephone number, email address and official website address.

4.2 Summary

As Bhatia (1993: 29) points out, “structural interpretation of the text-genre highlights the cognitive aspects of language organisation” and analysing the overall move structure can reveal “ways of communicating intention in specific areas of inquiry”. The communicative purposes are accomplished by the above-mentioned five moves which give the introductory pages their typical cognitive structure. The main communication function is **persuading**, in the sense that the university ultimately aims to elicit a favourable response from its intended readers. In his analytical model, Bhatia (1993: 45) says eliciting a desired response is a complex communicative process. In order to ensure its success, it needs to achieve two additional communicative purposes – **welcoming** in a warm and friendly manner and **informing** prospective students about the programme and the value of postgraduate education.

While Fairclough (1995: 107) identifies three main speech functions – persuading, informing and regulating – in analysing the Lancaster University 1990 undergraduate prospectus, he stresses that “the problematic meaning (problematic in the consumer-orientated model) of the university imposing requirements upon applicants does not have to be overtly expressed”. Similarly, in my corpus, there are only very vague nominal descriptions of target applicants without imposing any strict requirements. They are textualised by unspecific plural nouns (e.g. “applicants” (Lingnan)) and noun phrases such as “talented candidates of all backgrounds” (CityU), “students from Hong Kong and elsewhere in the world” (CUHK), “people with bachelor’s degrees pursuing postgraduate degrees” (PolyU) and “excellent students from all kinds of backgrounds” (Oxford). In interpreting the texts, the readers know that these universities are identifying a broad group of target applicants who are of *any* background (CityU and Oxford), with bachelor’s degrees (PolyU), and from all over the world (CUHK). This is probably because, as Askehave (2007: 735) suggests, some universities are “deliberately reluctant to assign highly specific attributes to students as this may prevent some students (who might not live up to the ‘description’) from applying”. Only one nominal description of Oxford – applicants who wish to be “the next generation’s best researchers and university teachers” – sounds more ambitious in creating and maintaining the traditional elitism of the oldest university in the English-speaking world. I would suggest that while the most important

communicative function is persuading as many students as possible to study at the particular university, the function of regulating is not recognisable and seems to be avoided in the texts.

In this chapter, I have answered the first research question by analysing the 14 introductory pages as instances of a sub-genre of the hybrid promotional genre and successfully identifying a standardised five-move generic structure. The texts share the same “identifiable communicative purposes” (Swales, 1990: 49) (i.e. persuading, welcoming and informing), use the same two media in written discourse (i.e. printed texts and web pages) and have similar groups of audience⁶ (e.g. prospective students from all over the world) as well as groups of readers (e.g. parents and teachers).

⁶ There is a distinction between the *audience* and the *reader* as defined by Hoey (2001: 14). The *audience* is “the intended readership, the imaginary person or persons whom the writer addresses or whose questions s/he tries to answer”, while the *reader* is “the person who actually encounters and processes the text” and whom “an author often has no control over”.

Chapter 5

Functional Grammatical Analysis of Introductory Pages

5.0 Introduction

Research in CDA has a long tradition of drawing on functional grammar (Coffin, Hewings and O'Halloran, 1994: 3). Halliday's functional approach is recognised as providing significant insights into language into action, and the advantage of using this approach is to allow critical discourse analysts to "make observations that would not be possible through more traditional forms of grammatical analysis" (Coffin et al., 1994: 1). As my interest is in the role allocation and social relationship of the main participants, I have conducted a qualitative analysis to examine how the introductory pages represent 'what is going on' (experiential meaning) as well as create social relationships and assign certain roles to the main participants (interpersonal meaning).

5.1 The Grammar of Clause and Experiential Meaning

In this section, I will focus on three process types: material process (the process of the external world), mental process (the process of consciousness) and relational process (the process of classifying and identifying). Halliday (1994: 107) suggests that the most powerful impression of human experience is that it consists of 'goings-on' – happening, doing, sensing, meaning, being and becoming, which are expressed in the grammar of clause and interpreted through transitivity. The term *transitivity* is defined as a grammatical system which "construes the world of experience into a manageable set of process types" (Halliday, 1994: 107). A process consists of the following three components:

1. the process itself: typically realised by verbal group
2. participants in the process: typically realised by nominal group
3. circumstances associated with the process: typically realised by adverbial group or prepositional phrase (Halliday, 1994: 107, 109).

These components provide the frame of reference for interpreting reader's experience of what is going on.

5.1.1 Material Process: Process of Doing

As the roles that social actors usually play in social practices and the grammatical roles they are given in texts do not need to be congruent, "representation can relocate roles or rearrange the social relations between the participants" (van Leeuwen, 2008: 4). As the examples below show, universities appear predominantly in clauses as an actor performing actions of "a strong supporting or service-providing nature" or "an 'enabling' nature" (Askehave, 2007: 732).

A. Supporting or service-providing actions performed by universities

As Table 14 shows, these clauses include the Actor *university* (usually as a grammatical subject in an active clause), the Beneficiary⁷ *students* (usually as an indirect object or sometimes left implicit) who will benefit from a Process signalled by an action verb. The frequent action verbs found in my corpus are *provide*, *offer*, *develop* and *help*; and the common services provided are postgraduate programmes, research opportunities, campus facilities and a wide range of "rewards" (see § 4.1.3 Table 10).

⁷ In a material process, the Beneficiary is either Recipient to whom goods are given to or Client for whom services are done (Halliday, 1994: 144-145). I will use the term *Beneficiary* in the remaining chapters.

Table 14: Examples of supporting or service-providing clauses

1. Active clause with an explicit Beneficiary

	Participant	Process	Participant		Participant
E.g. (Oxford)	We	offer	an ideal environment	for	research students.
Grammar	Subject	Verb	Direct object		Indirect object
Transitivity	Actor	Process: material	Goal		Beneficiary

Other examples include:

- By **imparting** professional knowledge and **helping** students **develop** practical skills, PolyU is actively promoting the development of the business and industrial sectors. (PolyU)
- UCL **offers** a wealth of advice and support to prepare you to achieve your personal, academic and professional aims. (UCL)

2. Active clause with a Beneficiary left implicit

	Participant	Process	Participant
E.g. (CityU)	The University	offers	a range of research degree and professional doctorate programmes.
Grammar	Subject	Verb	Direct object
Transitivity	Actor	Process: material	Goal

Other examples include:

- We **are** now **offering** a broad range of postgraduate programmes (HKBU)
- We **offer** a scenic, award-winning campus and lively university community (HKUST)
- Besides MPhil and PhD programmes, Lingnan **offers** the following taught postgraduate programmes (Lingnan)
- Our University **offers** a wide variety of professional postgraduate programmes (PolyU)
- The University ... **provides** a high standard of education at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. (HKU)
- The University also **provides** residential accommodation and financial assistance (HKU)
- Imperial College London **offers**... a network of tutors, advisors and counsellors **to offer** you advice and support during your studies (Imperial)
- Queen's University Belfast is a broadly-based, research-driven university **offering** an outstanding academic experience. (Queen's)
- The Graduate School **provides** and **directs** many initiatives developed **to support** and **enhance** your academic and personal development. (UCL)
- UCL's location in central London **offers** outstanding academic, professional and social benefits. (UCL)
- Our prospectus, which is also available online at ..., **offers** an introduction to the courses on offer (Oxford)

In the above examples, the Beneficiary (i.e. postgraduate students) can be understood easily from the context.

The most striking feature is that, in my corpus, there is no clause which involves the university performing typical “academic actions” (Askehave, 2007: 733), such as educating, teaching, tutoring or discussing. I would suggest that the frequent clausal representation of the university as a service provider, along with the absence of clauses associated with traditional academic actions, help build a consumer-orientated image of a student-centred university.

B. Enabling actions performed by universities

Enabling clauses are defined by Askehave (2007: 733) as clauses with the initiator – the university – as “the provider of the possibility of doing/being something”. In other words, the Beneficiary *students* do or become something as a result of the actions of the university.

Table 15: Examples of enabling clauses

	Participant	Process	Participant
E.g. (Durham)	Our interdisciplinary approach to teaching and research	ensures	that you will be at the cutting edge of your discipline.
Grammar	Subject	Verb	Direct object
Transitivity	Actor	Process: material	Goal

Other examples include:

- The University **invites** applications for admission to our MPhil/PhD programmes in 2009-10 (Lingnan)
- We **ensure** that your education as a graduate student at UCL **fulfils** your needs and expectations, **equips** you for a successful future, and **enables** you to make the most of the excitement of graduate studies. (UCL)
- That is ... why we want to **encourage** applications from excellent students from all kinds of backgrounds. (Oxford)

As Halliday (1994: 111) points out, the goals are “not necessarily concrete, physical events; they may be abstract doings and happenings”, such as a guarantee “that you will be at the cutting edge of your discipline” (Durham). In these clauses, students, as service seekers, will benefit from the university’s invitation for application (Lingnan and Oxford) and assurance of high-quality education and research (Durham and UCL).

C. Actions performed by students

From the above discussion, prospective students are often represented as the Beneficiary of the actions performed and initiated by universities and usually grammatically expressed as indirect objects. However, contrary to Askehave’s (2007:

735) finding that “descriptions of students are rare since the main focus of the brochure is on the university”, my findings show a significant number of clauses where students appear as the Actor who involves in actions of making decisions and using university services, as shown in Table 16 and Table 17 respectively.

Table 16: Examples of decision-making clauses

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I hope you will find in it the information you are seeking, and I hope you will avail yourself of the opportunities we offer. (HKU) • “If you really care about something, you’ll want to make a difference.” (Brookes) • 9/10 Brookes students said they would recommend the University to prospective students. (Brookes) • We are honoured you are considering Queen’s University Belfast as your destination for postgraduate study. (Queen’s) • If you choose Queen’s, you will find yourself working an institution which is a member of the prestigious Russell Group. (Queen’s) • Should you need further information, the Admissions and Access Service will be please to help. (Queen’s) • We are delighted that you are considering applying for postgraduate study at the University of Oxford. (Oxford) • Once you have decided which course and which college or hall is best for you, other sections of the prospectus will guide you through the application process. (Oxford)
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These clauses place prospective students in the role of customers who are able to choose and buy the services offered by the university, as signalled by the action verbs *to find*, *to avail of*, *to need* (information), *to consider*, *to choose*, *to apply*, *to decide* and even *to recommend* (to more customers). In this case, prospective students are “positioned as having authority” when someone is selling something to them (Fairclough, 1993: 157).

Table 17: Examples of clauses where students use university services

- Postgraduates at HKUST have the chance **to experience** the excitement and intellectual challenge of contributing to research that can transform the world. (HKUST)
- Many of our postgraduate students **come** from outside Hong Kong, and **make** an important contribution to the intellectual, social and cultural life of the University. (HKU)
- Our students **can** also **enjoy** the University's fine range of sporting and leisure facilities, and **take part in** its rich social life. (HKU)
- By **studying** at Durham you **will become** part of an academic community where teaching is directly informed by the world-class research undertaken throughout the University. (Durham)
- You **will find** that your learning experience with us allows you not only **to become** an expert in your chosen subject, but in relevant disciplines there are opportunities **to work** with colleagues across the University in order **to view** your subject from a multidisciplinary perspective. (Durham)
- You **will develop** specialist skills, unique perspectives and deeper understanding (Edinburgh)
- If you **bring** ability, commitment and motivation to your graduate studies at UCL, you **will be rewarded** with intellectual stimulation, personal fulfilment, and a firm foundation from which to achieve your aspirations. (UCL)
- Students **have** exceptional opportunities **to undertake**, or **participate** in, projects of investigation, experimentation, discovery and development. (UCL)
- ...whether you **will be making use of** the collections of the Bodleian Library or our museum collections... (Oxford)

These clauses portray students (after admission) as a user of university services in the authoritative position, as signalled by the action verbs *experience*, *enjoy*, *take part in*, *study*, *develop*, *undertake*, *participate in* and *make use of*.

It is worth pointing out two instances of the conditional if-clause when students are expressed as the Actor:

- If you **choose** Queen's, you **will find** yourself working an institution which is a member of the prestigious Russell Group. (Queen's)
- If you **bring** ability, commitment and motivation to your graduate studies at UCL, you **will be rewarded** with intellectual stimulation, personal fulfilment, and a firm foundation from which to achieve your aspirations. (UCL)

The conditional if-clause is a common advertising strategy “to single out the audience to which the advertisement applies” and “to strike some personal ‘chord’ in the heart of the appropriate type of consumer” (Leech, 1966: 107). These two full conditionals are powerful in expressing promises, because placing the if-clause in front of the dependent clause “[makes] an initial bid for attention by appealing to the customer's interest” (Leech, 1966: 117). The forceful effect of the UCL example is further enhanced by its position in the lead paragraph.

D. Clauses in the passive voice with implied agents

Implied agent: the university

As Table 18 shows, there are some material clauses in the passive voice, in which the Actor is still the university, while the grammatical subject is the students (UCL) or inanimate objects (e.g. programmes).

Table 18: Examples of clauses with universities as implied agents

Note: The sign [...] suggests the place where an optional by-phrase (in this case, by the university) can be inserted to indicate the Actor of the action but does not show in the original texts.

	Participant	Process	Participant	Circumstance
E.g. (CityU)	MPhil and PhD programmes	are offered	[...]	in all Colleges/Schools
Grammar	Subject	Verb		
Transitivity	Goal	Process: material	Actor left implicit	Circumstance

Other examples include:

- Admission offers **may be made** [...] before the end of the normal application period. (Lingnan)
- This Prospectus **has been designed** [...] to help you decide why you should choose to study here. (Queen's)
- You **are invited** [...] to join the exciting UCL endeavour aimed at improving the intellectual, cultural, social and technological circumstances of the world's people. (UCL)
- You **will be rewarded** [...] with intellectual simulation, personal fulfilment, and a firm foundation from which to achieve your aspirations. (UCL)
- UCL's staff and students **are drawn** [...] from a broad range of national, cultural and social backgrounds. (UCL)
- Whatever your plans, study at UCL **is designed** [...] to equip you not only with the academic knowledge associated with your chosen qualification, but also with skills for life. (UCL)

Two examples – an active clause from UCL and a passive clause from HKU – illustrate how a choice between grammatical processes and participant types can be “ideologically significant” (Fairclough, 2001: 102):

(a) UCL’s staff and students are drawn from a broad range of national, cultural and social backgrounds. (UCL)

(b) Many of our postgraduate students come from outside Hong Kong, and make an important contribution to the intellectual, social and cultural life of the University. (HKU)

In Example (a), in traditional grammar, the subject is UCL’s staff and students; while in functional grammar, the Actor is the university who performs the action of attracting and drawing staff and students to the institution, although it is left implicit in the text and can only be recovered from the context. In Example (b), there is a more natural representation where students perform the action of coming to the university “voluntarily”, instead of being drawn by the university. These two examples illustrate “how grammatical choices may be related to different ways of viewing the world and thus, by extension, our mental habits” (Coffin et al., 1994: 1). While HKU puts human – “our postgraduate students” – in a focal position of grammatical subject, UCL places staff and students in the passive voice, treating them as if they were objects or even commodities being drawn by the university for the sake of cultural diversity and financial benefits.

It is worth noting that the responsible agent – the university – is omitted in the UCL’s examples in Table 18. While the grammatical subject *you* refers to prospective students, the real Actor which performs the actions of inviting, drawing and rewarding students is grammatically suppressed. I would suggest that the omission of agency is ideological so as not to make the university look like a business which is “only interested in international education for monetary reasons” (British Council, 2008: 1) or its actions sound like business transactions (cf the active alternatives, e.g. UCL will reward you intellectual stimulation, personal fulfilment, and a firm foundation from which to achieve your aspirations). In the case of Lingnan, the fact that the *university* makes early admission offers is omitted probably because it is an exception and the

university tries to hide the fact that it may not follow the standard practice in special cases.

Implied agent: the students

There is only one instance of agentless material clause in the passive voice where the Actors are students:

Note: The sign [...] suggests the place where an optional by-phrase (in this case, by the students) can be inserted to indicate the Actor of the action but does not show in the original texts.

- Studies can be undertaken [...] full-time or part-time. (CityU)

Implied agents: other participants

The majority of the material clauses in my corpus imply agency to one of the two main participants. However, as Table 19 shows, several clauses assign or imply agency to other minor participants such as staff and external organisations and three clauses imply ambiguous agency.

Table 19: Examples of clauses with minor participants as (implied) agents

Agency	Example(s)
1. Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit agency E.g. We offer an ideal environment for research students, supported by some of the most distinguished scholars and researchers in the world in our departments and faculties (Imperial) • Implied agency E.g. The programmes are well designed [...] with academic vigour (HKBU)

2.External organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durham’s University’s high-quality teaching, rated excellent in 24 subjects [...], is underpinned by world-class research. (Here, the <i>by</i>-phrase could be “by external assessment” (e.g. Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) or “by external assessor”)
3. Ambiguous agents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing education is an important trend in the modern world as it is rightly seen as a pre-requisite for career advancement. (PolyU) • Education has always been prized in Hong Kong as one of the most important keys to success (HKU) • Postgraduate study at the University of Edinburgh is globally recognised as providing you with a truly unique opportunity. (Edinburgh)

As voice can make one transitive role more informationally prominent than another, agentless passives are sometimes used so that the Actor role is “elided altogether” (Martin, 2004: 88). The three agentless passives with ambiguous agents are used to enhance authority and credibility of the ‘claims’. In the PolyU example, who rightly sees continuing education as a pre-requisite for career development? Is it employers as the clause foregrounds “career development”? Readers are not certain what the claim is based on – whether it is a fact or an opinion. In the HKU example, who always prizes education in Hong Kong as one of the most important keys to success? Is it the government, the employers or the general public? Or is it because of the deeply-rooted value of education in Hong Kong? Note the choice of the main verb *prize* whose meaning is associated with “rewards” (see § 4.1.3 Table 10). In the Edinburgh example, the main verb *recognise* is modified by the adverb *globally* - is it recognised by everyone in the world? It is more likely to be understood in the institutional context that global recognition should come from assessment exercise and ranking, but the real Actor is not mentioned in the clause. From these three examples, I would suggest that agentless passives which foreground education as the grammatical subject work effectively in this promotional genre (where instant rewards (e.g. discounts, gifts) are not appropriate) by offering incentive in the form of

‘deferred’ rewards – “a pre-requisite for career advancement”, “one of the most important keys to success” and “a truly unique opportunity”.

5.1.2 Relational Process: Process of Being

A relational process involves a relation being set up between two separate entities, and the English system operates with three main types:

1. intensive: “x is a”
2. circumstantial: “x is at a”
3. possessive: “x has a”

and two different modes:

1. attributive as in “a is an attributive of x” or “x is a member of the class of a”
2. identifying as in “a is the identity of x”

(Halliday, 1994: 119)

In this section, I will focus on intensive and possessive processes in the attributive mode. In my corpus, the verbs realising the attributive processes – *be* and *become* – belong to the “ascriptive” class (Halliday, 1994: 120).

Table 20: Intensive process in the attributive mode

	Participant	Process	Participant
E.g. (Brookes)	25% of Brookes students	are	postgraduates.
Grammar	Subject	Verb	Direct object
Transitivity	Carrier	Process: intensive	Attribute

It should be noted that when an attributive clause is realised in its superlative form, it does serve to identify its carrier. As shown in Table 21, the attributive clause can be an identifying clause at the same time, for example:

Table 21: Intensive process in both attributive and identifying modes

	Participant	Process	Participant
E.g. (Brookes)	Brookes	was	the world's first Fairtrade university
Grammar	Subject	Verb	Direct object
Transitivity	Carrier	Process: intensive	Attribute
	Identified	Process: intensive	Identifier

This type of identifying clauses is also reversible:

	Participant	Process	Participant
E.g. (Brookes)	The world's first Fairtrade university	was	Brookes.
Grammar	Subject	Verb	Direct object
Transitivity	Identifier	Process: intensive	Identified

In a possessive clause, the relationship between the two entities is one of ownership: one entity possesses another (Halliday, 1994: 133). In all three examples found in my corpus, the relationship of possession is encoded with the possessor as the Carrier and the possessed as the Attributer, as illustrated in Table 22:

Table 22: Possessive process in the attributive mode

	Participant	Process	Participant
E.g. (PolyU)	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	has	over 70 years of experience in providing professional education
Grammar	Subject	Verb	Direct object
Transitivity	Carrier: possessed	Process: possession	Attribute: possessor

In analysing clauses of relational processes, I have categorised the examples into different groups:

Table 23: Categories of clauses of relational processes

1. Academic tradition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The University of Hong Kong, founded in 1911, is Hong Kong's oldest tertiary educational institution. (HKU) [<i>Intensive, attributing and identifying</i>] The Hong Kong Polytechnic University has over 70 years of experience in providing professional education (PolyU) [<i>Possessive, attributing</i>]
2. Academic excellence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A place at Durham is one of the most sought-after anywhere in Britain. (Durham) [<i>Intensive, attributing</i>] Queen's University Belfast is a broadly-based, research-driven university offering an outstanding academic experience. (Queen's) [<i>Intensive, attributing</i>] The University has an outstanding international reputation for its excellence in research (Oxford) [<i>Possessive, attributing</i>] The one, unassailable condition of being accepted for a graduate course at Oxford is evidence of your previous academic excellence, and of your future potential. (Oxford) [<i>Intensive, attributing</i>]

3. Staff

- Our academic staff **are** acknowledged experts in their fields (Durham) [*Intensive, attributing*]
- Many of our staff **are** advisers to organisations. (Durham) [*Intensive, attributing*]
- The University **has** more academic staff working in world-class research departments (rated 5* and 5 in the 2001 national Research Assessment Exercise) than any other university in the UK. (Oxford) [*Possessive, attribute and identifying*]

4. Description related to Destination

- The people of Hong Kong **are** eager to succeed, fiercely competitive, and extremely hardworking. (HKU) [*Intensive, attributing*]
- This small territory **has become** one of Asia's most successful economies. (HKU) [*Intensive, attributing*]

5. Student community

- 25% of Brookes students **are** postgraduates. (Brookes) [*Intensive, attributing*]
- The mix of cultural diversity and intellectual rigour **is** an essential part of Oxford (Oxford) [*Intensive, attributing*]

6. Campus facilities

- Internationally renowned resources ...**are** within walking distance. (UCL) [*Intensive, attributing*]
- Our academic resources **are** unrivalled (Oxford) [*Intensive, attributing*]

7. Unique selling points

- Durham **is** small and flexible enough to develop new approaches to teaching and research idea (Durham) [*Intensive, attributing*]

- “Oxford Brookes **is** a university with a growing reputation for engagement with the most important issues of our time.” (Brookes) [*Intensive, attributing*]
- Brookes **was** the world’s first Fairtrade university and **is** now one of the UK’s top green universities.” [*Intensive, attributing and identifying*]

As seen from the above examples, the universities describe themselves not only in terms of academic merit, but also a wide range of desirable non-academic attributes (see § 4.1.4). For example, highlighting cultural diversity (Oxford) and mentioning the number of postgraduate students (Brookes) emphasise that Oxford is a young and lively university city. These attributive and possessive clauses not only give descriptions but also “paint very vivid pictures [...] in the minds of the readers” (Osman, 2008: 68).

5.1.3 Mental Process: Process of Sensing

In a mental process, as illustrated in Table 24, the two participants are referred to as *Senser* who is the conscious being that is feeling, thinking or seeing and *Phenomenon* which is the thing or the fact which is “sensed” (Halliday, 1994: 117). The Phenomenon is the object of consciousness and it can be some entity (e.g. person, object or institution) or some process (e.g. action, event, state or relation) (Halliday, 1994: 115).

Table 24: Mental process in the affective mode

	Participant	Process	
E.g. (Oxford)	We	are delighted	that you are considering applying for postgraduate study at the University of Oxford.
Grammar	Subject	Verb	
Transitivity	Senser	Process: affection	Phenomenon: state

Other examples include:

- We **are dedicated** to providing information for prospective students (CityU)
- We **are proud** of the commitment of our highly-qualified academics to generate the rich ambience of collegial learning, and on their efforts to continuously develop programmes and curriculum (HKBU)
- We **are committed** to providing you with a stimulating environment where you will thrive on the many opportunities available at Durham to study beyond the traditional realms of postgraduate study (Durham)
- Should you need further information, the Admissions and Access Service **will be pleased** to help. (Queen's)
- The UCL Graduate School **is committed** to making sure that the quality and relevance of your graduate studies are of the highest level. (UCL)

In my corpus, the clauses of mental processes are mainly of the affection sub-type⁸. Such clauses are used to describe the participants' affective experience. CityU, HKBU, Durham, Queen's and Oxford use the first person plural pronoun *we* to show that, through synthetic personalisation, the university as a team is engaged in the mental processes of feeling dedicated, proud, committed, honoured and delighted respectively. The corporate *we*, expressed as the grammatical subject, reinforces the role as a 'sensing' participant who is "human-like" in the sense of "being endowed

⁸ Mental processes constitute three sub-types: perception (e.g. seeing and hearing.), affection (e.g. liking and fearing) and cognition (e.g. thinking, knowing and understanding) (Halliday, 1994: 118).

with consciousness” (Halliday, 1994: 114). Synthetic personalisation is defined by Halliday (1994: 168) as “a compensatory tendency to give the impression of treating each of the people ‘handled’ en masse as an individual”. The concept and application of this strategy will be discussed in greater detail in the next section (see § 5.2). In the examples of Queen’s and UCL, the Senser is an inanimate object – the Admissions and Access Services and the UCL Graduate School respectively – which is presented as a less personalised alternative.

The universities make use of the clauses of mental process either to express thanks to prospective students for considering them (Queen’s and Oxford) or to make a firm promise to provide them with an excellent university experience through dedication, pride and commitment (CityU, HKBU, Durham, Queen’s and UCL). I would suggest that this advertising strategy is closely related to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) definition of positive face – “the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others” which is based on Goffman’s (1972) concept of face. As all revealed feelings are positive and desirable, both functions aim to project a more “personalised and assertive” institutional identity (Fairclough, 1993: 146) of these universities.

5.2 Personal Pronouns and Interpersonal Meaning

In this section, I will discuss the interpersonal meaning of the two main participants when their references are made explicit by the use of personal pronouns (cf. when left implicit, see § 5.1.1 D). Fairclough (2001: 93) sees personal pronouns as “a formal feature with relational value” and “a trace of and a cue to the social relationships where are enacted via the text”. The advertiser (i.e. the universities) needs to “direct an appeal, presupposing a determinate appealer, to individual audience members” and it is therefore very important that both the advertiser and the audience are personalised through synthetic personalisation due to the “actual conditions of production and interpretation of advertising discourse” (Halliday, 1994: 168).

The introductory pages in my corpus are characterised by a significant use of first- and second-person pronouns such as *we*, *us*, *our*, *you* and *your*. I will focus on the

corporate *we* in identifying the addresser as the spokesperson for the university and the direct address *you* in referring to prospective students.

5.2.1 The Corporate *We*

The direct naming is used in all universities except Lingnan, and the full names often appear when the universities are mentioned for the first time. On subsequent references, either the short forms (e.g. CityU and Durham⁹) or a noun phrase with a definite determiner *the* (e.g. the University and the Graduate School) is used to refer to the university as an institutional establishment in general. However, for the texts which uses both the names and pronouns to refer to the university¹⁰, the first-person plural pronoun *we* is often used when referring to the university as the main Actor offering programmes or services. This personalisation of the institution as *we* (or the corporate *we*) is widely used in advertising and corporate writing when “the text speaks on behalf of an organisation, differentiating it from the addressees but still personalising the source” (Fowler, Hodge, Kress and Trew, 1979: 202). I will illustrate the distinction in usage between names and the corporate *we* in the following two examples:

(a) In the past years, the Graduate School **has experienced** a significant growth in terms of diversity of programmes and enrolment number. We **are** now **offering** a broad range of postgraduate programme through both coursework and research modes (HKBU)

(b) The University **has** an outstanding international reputation for its excellence in research for its excellence in research, and we **take** extremely seriously our work of training the next generation’s best teachers and university lecturers. (Oxford)

While the Graduate School (HKBU) and the University (Oxford), as educational establishments, experiences a growth in enrolment and has an excellent reputation respectively, it is *we* – the animate participants – who performs the actions of offering

⁹ In the cases of Durham, Edinburgh and Oxford, the short forms of the universities coincides with the names of the cities where they are located.

¹⁰ Lingnan, Imperial, Brookes and UCL are the only four which do not use any personal pronouns to refer to the university.

programmes and contributing to train the next generation. Muhlhasier and Harre (1990: 175-176) say that portraying service providers as a team involving a group of *we*s is a frequent device in advertising, in which the speaker represents the corporation who speaks with a corporate voice. This use is also related to the clauses of mental process (see § 5.1.3) when the university acts like a human-like sensing participant and takes on a voice. Although the subject pronoun *we* is not used in some universities, the object pronoun *us* are used in HKBU and CUHK, and the possessive determiner *our* is used to describe PolyU (“Meet our President” and “Our University”) and CUHK (“Our Graduate School”).

5.2.2 The Singular *You*

Concerning the second-person pronoun *you*, Fairclough (1993: 147) notices the individualised address of potential applicants by a singular *you*, not a plural one, in his research into university prospectuses. According to Fairclough (2001: 107), the direct address of members of the audience on an individual basis with *you* is very common in advertising to imply “a relationship of solidarity” when there are many actual and potential readers whose identity is unknown to the writer. This applies to the introductory pages when *you* is used to form and maintain a personal relationship between the university and prospective students.

In the introductory pages from Hong Kong, there are a total of six tokens of *you* (HKUST, PolyU and HKU), in addition to one token of *your* (HKBU) and one reflexive pronoun *yourself* (HKU). An interesting point is that all these tokens are found in Move 5: Eliciting Desired Responses, for example:

- We look forward to **you** joining us. (HKUST)
- I hope you will avail **yourself** of the opportunities we offer (HKU)
- We look forward to **your** enthusiastic involvement and support. (HKBU)

However, some universities address their target audience in the third person to stimulate a more formal and perhaps hierarchical relationship and maintain a wider social distance. CUHK even uses the impersonal third-person plural pronoun *they* to refer to the interested students.

In contrast to those from Hong Kong, the introductory pages from the UK show that, to a much larger extent, prospective students are made explicit and often referred to in the second person. Apart from Imperial (one token of *you*) and Brookes (one token of *your*), the other five universities use second-person pronouns extensively to maintain a more informal and equal relationship throughout the texts.

5.2.3 Imperative Clauses

It is worth noting that, by the use of imperative clauses, the second-person *you* is implied but without direct textual reference, for example:

- For more information, contact the Chow Yei Ching School of Graduate Studies. (CityU)
- Join us in our pursuit of academic excellence (CUHK)
- Enjoy reading about Queen's University (Queen's)

As Askehave (2007: 736) suggests, imperatives are “an attention-seeking advice known from promotional and advertising discourse” and often used as “a friendly, direct call for action”.

5.3 Summary

In the first part of this chapter, I have analysed the grammar of clauses of material, relational and mental processes, using Halliday's functional grammar approach. The analysis enables me to examine why particular participants – the university, prospective students or other minor participants – are chosen in specific institutional and social contexts (e.g. service-providing setting and decision-making setting), why these choices are made, what interests are served by transitivity and what communicative purposes achieved.

In the second part, I have highlighted the frequent use of the corporate *we* and the singular *you* to refer to the university and individual students respectively. These distinctive and persuasive features work very well in the genre of introductory pages, and support Fairclough's point that they “stimulate a conversational and therefore

relatively personal, informal, solidarity and equal relationship between institution and potential applicant” (Fairclough, 1993:146-147). Some readers will eventually decide to ‘buy’ the university service “on the basis of strategic calculation of effects” (Fairclough, 1992: 216). The use of personal pronouns also contributes to interdiscursivity since conversationalisation in the written discourse is “a part of the interdiscursive mix” (Fairclough, 1993: 140).

Chapter 6

Trends and Variations in Introductory Pages

6.0 Introduction

The applied genre analysis in Chapter 5 and the analysis of formal features with Halliday's functional grammar in Chapter 6 provide relevant and useful information about the way introductory pages are constructed and manipulated by members of the institutional discourse community to attract international students.

According to Bhatia (1999: 27-29), there are several factors which contribute to generic versatility, including cross-cultural factors, organisational differences and audience characteristics. A genre may vary across cultures and languages, especially in the choice of move structure, linguistic realisations and rhetorical strategies. It is worth mentioning that while all introductory pages are written in English, the PolyU one is written in both English and Chinese (in traditional Chinese characters) and the HKBU one is written in English and Chinese (in simplified Chinese characters) in order to accommodate a major target student group by "speaking their language", probably because a large portion of the non-local students in Hong Kong is from mainland China, as briefly mentioned in § 1.2.

6.1 Variations in Move Structure and Linguistic Resources

There are no significant cross-cultural variations in the overall move structure. Bhatia (1993: 56) points out that, in applied genre analysis, moves are "artificially separated" for "convenient formularisation and systemic discussion". Although not every text uses all the five moves or arranges them in the same sequence, the shared set of communicative purposes remains the same as the move structure allows "a certain degree of flexibility in the number of moves used in a specific promotional effort by considering some moves more essential than others" and "a certain degree of freedom in sequencing the moves" (Bhatia, 1993: 56).

For example, in Move 1: Welcoming, HKBU, CUHK, PolyU, HKU and Oxford adopt the form of a foreword or a message from university leaders (e.g. the President of the university or the Dean of the graduate school). In these texts, the university leaders act as ambassadors to greet the readers and open the door into the university world (e.g. “Meet our President” (PolyU)). Apart from CUHK, these four universities also include a paragraph of the university leader with a smile or a friendly gesture (e.g. HKBU (p. 71)) and his/her signature (only in PolyU, HKU and Oxford) to enhance the effect of the university’s open welcome.

Although this move achieves the purpose of welcoming students, the university’s leading role as a more authoritative figure is ideologically reinforced through its addressing students from a position of authority. This differs from the extensive use of personal pronouns in most UK universities (see § 5.2) to convey informality and shorten the social distance between the university and prospective students. The approach of the UK is also ideologically motivated as “a continued concentration on student recruitment alone would send the message that the UK is only interested in international education for monetary reasons” and it would “damage the UK’s positioning and how [it is] perceived internationally” (British Council, 2008: 1).

There is a trend for universities to maintain a common institutional identity. However, as I will discuss below, individual introductory pages do show evidence of attempts to build a unique image and stand out from their counterparts, mainly through multimodality and other persuasive promotional strategies.

6.2 Variation in Multimodality

In this section, I will discuss the layout and design of the introductory pages from a multimodal perspective. The universities employ multimodality in the introductory pages in order to grab readers’ attention.

In general, the UK universities make use of multimodality more frequently and extensively than those in Hong Kong. All universities except Edinburgh include images showcasing the university campus and/or student life (CityU, Lingnan, CUHK,

Durham, Imperial, Brookes, Queen's and UCL), photographs of the university leaders (PolyU, and HKU), or both (HKBU, HKUST and Oxford).

In terms of graphological devices, Imperial (p. 79) adopts a clear and concise tabular layout with five bullet points signalled by arrows; UCL (p. 86) has a much denser layout with three information-packed columns on a single page; Queen's (p. 83) has two dialogues boxes beginning with "Welcome to Queen's" and "Hello"; and Brookes (pp. 81-82) uses a flowchart-like diagrammatic layout with short sentences or quotations and colourful images, which resembles the sophisticated design of some tourist information brochures. In contrast, the universities in Hong Kong adopt a plainer and more conventional layout.

In terms of typographical devices, Edinburgh (p. 84) is a striking example as the white lettering stands out on a navy blue background and the title "Welcome" is printed in a distinctively larger font and echoes with the closing line "Welcome to Edinburgh". Another eye-catching example is Durham (p. 78) with the large title "A world-class learning experience" and a smaller slogan "Be part of a World Class" in the top right-hand corner, both printed in red. The phrase "world class" appears twice on a single page, as an adjective and a noun phrase respectively, so as to linger in readers' mind for a longer time.

Medium factors, as Bhatia (1999: 31-32) points out, also play "an increasingly complex, dynamic and dominant role in professional writing". Although the traditional printed mode is still significant, the choice of an online medium by four universities (see § 3.2 Table 4) determines the choice of some persuasive strategies to enable more effective communication, such as direct links to corresponding departments and provision of email address and official website address (see § 4.1.5). Concerning the size of the printed prospectuses, although most prospectuses use the standard A4 size, Durham has slightly smaller size (W 21cm X L 24cm), perhaps to reinforce its smaller campus and student population.

6.3 Variations in Promotional Strategies

In this section, I will discuss the use of testimonials and quotations as a commonly used strategy in promotional discourse. In order to enhance the image of a student-centred university, Brookes and Durham make use of written statements of “known endorser[s]” who praise the virtues of the universities (Askehave, 2007: 738). Brookes’ introductory pages are full of written statements which take two different forms. The first form is staff testimonials “spoken” by university leaders (i.e. one from the Vice-Chancellor and one from the Chancellor, both in relation to its green business) as signalled by a large pair of quotation marks (p. 80), in addition to a collective student testimonial from the 2007 student satisfaction survey (“9/10 Brookes students said they would recommend the University to prospective students”).

The second form is direct quotations from reliable publications such as the Times Good University Guide, the Times newspaper and the Virgin Alternative Guide to British Universities. Also, Durham’s quotation signalled by double quotation marks is from the 2008 Sunday Times University Guide. HKBU’s quotation “Prestige in Academic Excellence” is interesting as there is no known endorser, although the readers could infer that it is from the voice of the university and serves as a slogan. The testimonials and quoted statements work effectively in persuasion because the former portray universities through the eyes and voices of university and former or current students as “witnesses” of the statements, while the latter enhance the “trust and credibility” of self-promotional claims through positive external evaluation (Askehave, 2007: 738). Personalising the texts by creating an atmosphere of authenticity and trust is thus an effective promotional strategy used in my corpus.

6.4 Summary

As seen from the above discussion, the language used in introductory pages falls on a spectrum. In some examples, the university is presented as an authoritative entity, with the power to admit or reject applicants (e.g. Lingnan, which provides basic information only and employs minimal promotional moves/strategies), while in others, the university exists primarily to serve fee-paying customers (e.g. Brookes with various “elements of advertising and other promotional genres” (Fairclough, 1993:

146)) (see § 6.2 and § 6.3). Although it was assumed that the introductory pages from Hong Kong and the UK would display some significant differences as they target at different markets (a regional market and an international market respectively), there are no obvious systemic variations found in the texts between these two regions. I would suggest that the variations are more related to “corporate and organisational differences” (Bhatia, 1999: 27) in which many universities have “their own preferred ways” and “constraints” of achieving communicative purposes, thus resulting in a diverse range of linguistic and multimodal resources as well as promotional strategies. In other words, there is a considerable amount of flexibility and accommodation in the hybrid promotional genre of introductory pages even among universities from the same culture.

Chapter 7

Conclusion and Implications

7.0 Introduction

In this concluding chapter, I will review this study and draw attention to factors which might have affected the results. I will also discuss the implications for writing university prospectuses on which the findings of this study are based and suggest future directions for research into public discourse of higher education.

7.1 Social Meaning in Discourse of Higher Education

The following research questions were posed at the beginning of the study.

1. What are the generic structure and recognisable communicative functions of introductory pages in university prospectuses?
2. How is language constructed to reveal social roles and relationships between the two main participants – the university and prospective students – in order to achieve a shared set of communicative goals?
3. Are there any systemic textual and discursive variations between the universities in Hong Kong and those in the UK?

In this text-based study, I have used the applied genre analysis to establish the introductory pages of university prospectuses as a hybrid promotional genre. The introductory pages were found to share a recognisable set of communication purposes (i.e. persuading, welcoming and informing). In achieving similar communicative goals, they display consistency of a five-move structure (see § 4.1) and regularity of discursive organisation. However, due to organisational differences, individual universities employ a diverse range of promotional strategies to display generic versatility. These tendencies are contrary to what I might have expected from Question 3 when examining a set of data from two culturally distinct institutional contexts.

The application of Halliday's functional grammar with the CDA perspective has proved to be successful in investigating role allocation and social relationships of the two main participants. The close examination of clauses and personal pronouns shows how language is constructed and manipulated to achieve the set of communicative goals and fulfill individual private intentions.

7.2 Review of the Research

It is found that the criteria for data collection (see § 3.1) might have affected the results of this study. It is difficult to give a precise definition of introductory pages of university prospectuses, due to various types of promotional strategies and multimodal resources employed by the universities resulting in deviations. In the Imperial example, I have only selected a page with the heading "Imperial College London offers ..." and five bullet points but omitted the subsequent two pages with two international league tables and a timeline of "100+ years of innovation", because these two pages are positioned under a new heading "Overview" and it may not serve as the very first point of contact prospective students have with the university.

7.3 Recommendations for Writing Prospectuses

In order to meet the expectations of a diverse audience and maintain a mutually beneficial professional relationship between the university and prospective students, expert writers in the institutional discourse community are required to have:

1. a mastery of the interdiscursive practices of university publications;
2. a deep understanding of standardised communicative goals and more immediate private intentions within a well-defined and established sociocultural context;
3. a full awareness of the participants a particular genre (or sub-genre) is likely to aimed at; and
4. most importantly, writing competency to go beyond the constraints and "exploit the tactical space available within the boundaries of the genre" (Bhatia, 1999: 26).

Furthermore, in facing fierce competition in the globalised market of higher education in the 21st century, writers should be able to create and develop new generic forms of

achieve novel communicative purposes within the framework of socially accepted generic boundaries.

7.4 Conclusion

It is hoped that the findings of this study can help universities and international educational organisations produce better hybrid informational-cum-promotional texts which target specific groups of students. As technological innovations are bringing about new forms of social interaction (Hutchby and Barnett, 2005: 148), the choice of moves and promotional strategies depends largely on the choice of medium. This study indicates that further research into online promotional genres (e.g. personalised e-prospectus and online application form) is needed to study a new relationship between the new technology of the Internet and practices of the higher educational discourse.

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Appendix 1: Summary of the 14 introductory pages in the corpus

(The full names are listed in alphabetical order.)

Hong Kong

University	Headline	Medium	Page(s) selected	Retrieved from (as at 23 July 2009) (For online sources only)
1. City University of Hong Kong (CityU)	Admissions & Taught Postgraduate degree (2 paragraphs)	Online website (Printed copy not available, online applications encouraged)	p. 1	http://www.admo.cityu.edu.hk/
2. Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU)	Message from the Director	Online website (No overseas delivery service of printed copies)	p. 1	http://www.hkbu.edu.hk/~gs/eng/message.php
3. Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)	Welcome to HKUST	Printed copy (Title: Postgraduate Prospectus 2009-10)	p. 1	N/A
4. Lingnan University (Lingnan)	Taught postgraduate programmes	Online website (Printed copy not available)	p. 1	http://www.ln.edu.hk/reg/info/pgrad.html
5. The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK)	Foreword	PDF file downloaded online (Title: Postgraduate Prospectus: Taught Programmes 2009-10)	p. 2	http://www2.cuhk.edu.hk/gss/download/pdf/taught_program/foreword.pdf

6. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU)	Meet our President (President's Foreword)	Online website (Title: STUDY@POLYU: Postgraduate Programmes) (Printed copies not available)	p. 1	http://www28.polyu.edu.hk/aseprospectus/jsp/president.jsp?cms_menu_id=6409&websiteId=1&schemeId=200814&langId=1
7. The University of Hong Kong (HKU)	A Message from the Vice-Chancellor & President	Printed copy (Title: Postgraduate Prospectus 2009-2010)	p. 1	(Also available online) http://www.hku.hk/acad/ugp/studying_message.html

The UK

University	Headline	Medium	Page(s) selected	Retrieved from (as at 23 July 2009) (For online sources only)
1. Durham University (Durham)	A world-class learning experience	Printed copy (Title: Postgraduate Prospectus 2009/10 (Taught programmes and research degrees or PhD))	p. 3	N/A
2. Imperial College London (Imperial)	Imperial College London offers...	Printed copy (Title: Postgraduate Prospectus 2009-10)	p. 3	N/A
3. Oxford Brookes University (Brookes)	A great place to be a student	Printed copy (Title: 09 Postgraduate Prospectus)	pp. 1-3	N/A
4. Queen's University Belfast (Queen's)	About this prospectus	PDF file downloaded online (Title: Postgraduate prospectus 2009) (Printed copies not available)	p. 1	http://www.qub.ac.uk/home/ProspectiveStudents/FileStore/Filetoupload,136955,en.pdf
5. The University of Edinburgh (Edinburgh)	Welcome	Printed copy (Title: Postgraduate Study 2009 Entry)	Inside front cover	N/A
6. UCL (UCL)	UCL Advantages	Printed copy (Title: Graduate Prospectus 2009/10)	pp. 2-3	N/A

7. University of Oxford (Oxford)	Foreword: Welcome to the University of Oxford Graduate Studies Prospectus for entry in 2009-2010 (From Professor Elizabeth A Fallaise, pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education)	Printed copy (Title: Graduate Studies Prospectus 2009-2010)	p. 2	N/A
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Appendix 2: The complete corpus

Hong Kong

1. City University of Hong Kong (CityU)

City University of Hong Kong

Home | Contact

 香港城市大學
City University of Hong Kong

Research & Professional Doctorate Degree

Taught Postgraduate Degree

Bachelor's Degree

Associate Degree

International and Mainland Students

Exchange Students

Visiting Students

Other Admissions

To Apply

Contact Us

CityU provides a full range of cutting-edge education at the research and professional doctorate, taught postgraduate, undergraduate and associate degree levels. We welcome applications from talented candidates of all backgrounds. We are dedicated to providing information for prospective students to make informed decisions about applying for admission to the University.

Research, Professional Doctorate And Taught Postgraduate Degree

CityU excels in professional education and applied research. The University offers a range of research degree, professional doctorate and taught postgraduate programmes. For the Taught Postgraduate programmes offered by the University, consult the [list of Taught Postgraduate programmes](#). In terms of research studies, diverse areas are provided to reflect the University's strengths and to suit individuals' research interests. For more information, contact the Chow Yei Ching School of Graduate Studies ([Research Degree](#) and [Professional Doctorate Degree](#))

Bachelor's Degree

We offer over 70 bachelor's degree programmes. For government-funded programmes, applicants may apply through the [Joint University Programmes Admissions System](#) or [direct application](#). For non-government funded programmes, applications are received through [direct application](#) only. In addition, final-year associate degree / higher diploma students seeking articulation entry to bachelor's degree programmes may apply through the [Special Admissions Scheme](#) (*for AD/HD graduates*).

Associate Degree

We offer over 40 associate degree programmes. For government-funded programmes, applicants may apply through the [Joint University Programmes Admissions System](#) or [direct application](#). For non-government-funded programmes, please consult the website of the [Community College of City University](#).

To Apply

Check Application Status

Programme Information 2009 Entry

IUPAS Programme Finder

Introduction to CityU

ZH 中文 (香港特別行政區)

2. Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU)

研究院 Graduate School

[香港浸會大學](#)
HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

[Contact Us](#) | [Home](#) | [HKBU Home](#) | [Useful Links](#)

[Message from the Director](#)


[Graduate School Overview](#)

[Admissions](#)

[Current Students](#)

[Newsletters](#)

*"Prestige in
Academic Excellence"*




Message from the Director

At a time when Hong Kong is transforming itself into a knowledge-based economy, the Graduate School of Hong Kong Baptist University has identified its role and endeavored to contribute to the nurture of new talents. The University has established the Graduate School to further promote our postgraduate programmes and to upgrade the support for postgraduate studies administration. The primary goal of the Graduate School is to help the University build up a postgraduate study culture.

We are proud of the commitment of our highly-qualified academics to generate the rich ambience of collegial learning, and on their efforts to continuously develop programmes and curriculum responding to local and regional needs.

In the past years, the Graduate School has experienced a significant growth in terms of diversity of programmes and enrolment number. We are now offering a broad range of postgraduate programmes through both coursework and research modes, ranging from postgraduate certificate to doctoral level. The programmes are all well designed with academic vigour and incorporate most up-to-date materials.

Join us in our pursuit of academic excellence and we look forward to your enthusiastic involvement and support.



Prof. Tang Tao
Director of Graduate School

3. Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)

Welcome to HKUST

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), established in 1991, has rapidly risen to be ranked among the world's leading research universities. We take pride in our many globally recognized achievements in science, engineering, business and management and social science and humanities, our world-class faculty who drive forward discoveries in their respective fields, and our high-powered students who will go on to lead the next generation of influential thinkers and innovators.

Working alongside our international academics and supported by our state-of-the-art facilities, postgraduates at HKUST have the chance to experience the excitement and intellectual challenge of contributing to research that can transform the world. In addition, we offer a

scenic, award-winning campus and lively university community all located within 30 minutes of exhilarating downtown Hong Kong.

Situated at the southern tip of China and in the heart of Asia, cosmopolitan Hong Kong offers dynamic career and personal development opportunities, providing access to one of the world's most active growth regions, new cultural insights, and adding a truly global perspective to your outlook.

We look forward to you joining us.

Prof Paul C W Chu
President, HKUST



4. Lingnan University (Lingnan)

[Home](#) [Postgraduate Programmes](#) [Academic Units](#) [Registry](#)

 **Lingnan** 嶺南大學
University



Postgraduate Programmes

- MPhil and PhD
- Taught Postgraduate



Research Postgraduate Programmes – MPhil and PhD

Lingnan offers Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programmes in

Arts - Chinese, Cultural Studies, English, History, Philosophy, Translation and Visual Studies

Business and Social Sciences

The University invites applications for admission to our MPhil/PhD programmes in 2009-10 from 1 December 2008 to 30 January 2009. It is advisable for applicants to apply as early as possible. Admission offers may be made before the end of the normal application period.

Taught Postgraduate Programmes

Besides MPhil and PhD programmes, Lingnan offers the following taught postgraduate programmes:

- Executive Master of Business Administration
- Master of Arts in Chinese
- Master of Arts in Practical Philosophy
- Master of Cultural Studies
- Master of Science in International Banking and Finance
- Postgraduate Diploma in Accountancy / Master of Accountancy
- Postgraduate Diploma in Liberal Studies

YOU ARE VISITOR **121174** SINCE 19 DEC 2005

5. The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK)



Foreword

In recent years, the Chinese University of Hong Kong has experienced rapid growth in its number of postgraduate programmes and postgraduate students. As of September 2008, our Graduate School was offering more than 240 postgraduate programmes with an enrollment of over 10,500 students. In response to societal needs, we offer postgraduate degree, postgraduate diploma, and postgraduate certificate programmes in a broad range of academic subject areas. These programmes operate with different study periods and modes of study in order to accommodate the diverse needs of the students. At the same time, we hold fast to our fundamental goal of aiming for excellence in our intellectual pursuits. We strive to achieve high programme quality through our distinguished faculty and experienced administrative staff.

We hope this prospectus provides students from Hong Kong and elsewhere in the world with a glimpse of our programmes. They are welcome to contact us for further information and to join us in our pursuit of academic excellence.

Wing Shing Wong
Dean
Graduate School

6. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU)



THE HONG KONG
POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
香港理工大學

Capture a Rectangle Region

STUDY @ POLYU

HOME | SEARCH | SITEMAP | CONTACT US

Useful Links

Step to Admissions

FAQ

Contact List for Academic Dept.

Postgraduate Programmes

Why PolyU?

About Taught Postgraduate Programmes

Programme Search & Updates

Admissions Policies

Fees & Financial Assistance

Applying to PolyU

Meet our President

President's Foreword



The Hong Kong Polytechnic University has over 70 years of experience in providing professional education that prepares students to meet the ever-changing needs of society, and particularly the challenges posed by today's knowledge-based economy.

Our University offers a wide variety of professional postgraduate programmes, ranging from engineering and business administration, through fashion and design, to social work and healthcare studies. By imparting professional knowledge and helping students develop practical skills, PolyU is actively promoting the development of the business and industrial sectors through the supply of high-quality professionals.

Continuing education is an important trend in the modern world as it is rightly seen as a pre-requisite for career advancement. Recent years have seen increasing numbers of people with bachelor's degrees pursuing postgraduate degrees. People who possess expertise in more than one discipline undoubtedly have an edge in advancing their careers.

I very much hope that you will find this website useful in exploring the many study opportunities available at PolyU and I look forward to welcoming you to one of our programmes.

Timothy W. Tong, PhD
President
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

7. The University of Hong Kong (HKU)

STUDYING AT HKU

The University of Hong Kong



Capture a Rectangle Region

[STUDYING AT HKU](#) | [FACULTIES & PROGRAMMES](#) | [FACILITIES & SUPPORT](#) | [FEES & FINANCE](#) | [CONTACTS](#) | [QUICK REFERENCE](#)

[A Message from the Vice-Chancellor](#)
[About the University of Hong Kong](#)
[Programmes Offered](#)
[Teaching and Learning](#)
[Application and Admissions](#)
[Employment Destinations Statistics](#)
[Overseas Applicants](#)

A Message from the Vice-Chancellor

[Print this page](#)



As Vice-Chancellor of The University of Hong Kong, I am very pleased to give you an introductory overview of an institution with a long and distinguished academic heritage and an international reputation for forward-looking pioneering research.

HKU is the territory's first and foremost university, and for close to a century has trained generations of graduates who have served the community as leaders in almost every walk of life. This tradition remains as strong today as ever, and our programmes and teaching philosophy have enabled us to nurture informed, well-rounded students who are ready to meet the challenges of a globalised knowledge-based economy.

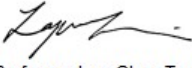
HKU offers a wide spectrum of high-quality programmes with an emphasis on encouraging a flexible approach to studies. These are dedicated to helping our students achieve their personal best academically, while also training them to become independent thinkers and articulate communicators. HKU has internationally renowned teachers, first-rate libraries, state-of-the-art equipment and facilities, and the campus has comprehensive digital access to ensure students remain at the leading edge of knowledge acquisition. The University also leads the way in terms of funding and awards from the government and support from the community, which in turn means exceptional support services and facilities for our students.

Our broad-based curriculum also helps promote a philosophy of life-long learning and whole-person development. Our students are encouraged to take advantage of a wide range of extracurricular activities, including general education courses, mentorship programmes, industry placements and international exchange programmes. HKU has academic links with more than 400 overseas universities and over 180 partner institutions in 25 different countries, thereby providing opportunities for all HKU students to have an international educational experience. Intercultural learning also takes place on campus, as HKU is host to over 3,300 international students and more than half of our teachers are international faculty. Hall life has been a key element of the HKU student experience since the founding of the University, and today over 4,700 students take advantage of this unique opportunity.

In preparing to change from a 3-year to a 4-year curriculum in 2012, the University has taken the opportunity to revitalize its programmes while retaining its best traditions. Some new initiatives will be introduced in 2009-10 so that earlier cohorts will have an opportunity to enjoy some of the benefits of the new curriculum before 2012.

The new curriculum will adopt a 'student-driven' approach to enable students to take responsibility for developing, with appropriate academic advising, a full and rich programme of academic pursuits in various combinations of specialties and disciplines, coupled with diverse co-curricular experiences best suited to individual development and interests. Curricular and co-curricular learning will be integrated through experiential, international and capstone learning experiences common to all undergraduate programmes.

I am sure you will find a programme that meets your needs and interests in this prospectus. I do hope you will join us for a unique experience that only a world-class university dedicated to learning and discovery can offer, and I look forward to welcoming you to HKU.



Professor Lap-Chee Tsui
Vice-Chancellor

[Top](#)

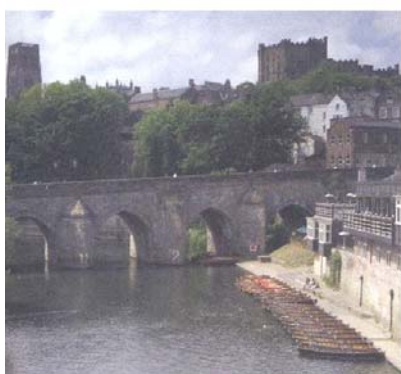
The UK

1. Durham University (Durham)

Be part of a
World Class

A world-class learning experience

By studying at Durham you will become part of an academic community where teaching is directly informed by the world-class research undertaken throughout the University. Our interdisciplinary approach to teaching and research ensures that you will be at the cutting edge of your discipline.



“Durham University’s high-quality teaching, rated excellent in 24 subjects, is underpinned by world-class research. A place at Durham is one of the most sought-after anywhere in Britain.”

Sunday Times University Guide, 2008

We have strengths across the arts, humanities, sciences, social sciences and health, with particularly strong international research reputations in Chemistry, Geography, English, Law, Physics, History and Applied Mathematics. This expertise is also reflected in the taught postgraduate programmes we offer and we have communities of taught postgraduates in many areas such as Applied Social Sciences, Business, Education and Government & International Affairs.

We are committed to providing you with a stimulating environment where you will thrive on the many opportunities available at Durham to study beyond the traditional realms of postgraduate study.

Our academic staff are acknowledged experts in their fields and this is demonstrated not only through the research and teaching that they undertake, but also by the demand for their expertise from around the globe.

Many of our staff are advisers to organisations such as NATO, the United Nations, and the World Economic Forum. Others are also advisers to governments, parliamentary select committees, think-tanks and other notable organisations who draw on the expertise here at Durham to inform developments in strategy and policies.

Your subject from a different perspective

Durham is small and flexible enough to develop new approaches to teaching and research ideas which transcend disciplinary boundaries. You will find that your learning experience with us allows you not only to become an expert in your chosen subject, but in relevant disciplines there are also opportunities to work with colleagues across the University in order to view your subject from a multidisciplinary perspective. This is done through our many research centres and groups but also through our flagship research institutes, established to provide a stimulating environment based on interdisciplinary research. You can find out more about research institutes on page eight.

Postgraduate Prospectus 2009/10 03

2. Imperial College London (Imperial)



Imperial College London offers...

- ❖ an education that is respected by employers and institutions across the globe
- ❖ inspirational courses and research led by internationally renowned staff
- ❖ the chance to study in a stimulating environment among some of the best minds in the world
- ❖ a range of fellowships, studentships and bursaries
- ❖ a network of tutors, advisors and counsellors to offer you advice and support during your studies

3. Oxford Brookes University (Brookes)



Oxford Brookes is a university with a growing reputation for engagement with the most important issues of our time.

Shami Chakrabarti

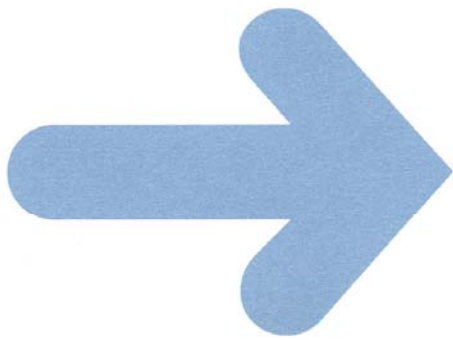
*Chancellor of Oxford Brookes University
and Director of Liberty*

If you really care about something, you'll want to make a difference. That's why Brookes was the world's first Fairtrade university and is now one of the UK's top green universities.

Professor Janet Beer

Vice-Chancellor

A great
place to
be a
student



Great
learning and
research

'An institution that is
challenging the
traditional universities
on their own ground'

The Times Good University Guide



9/10

Brookes students said
they would recommend
the University to
prospective students.

Student Satisfaction Survey, 2007

Oxford: the bigger picture

'There's a buzz around
green business in and
around Oxford...'

The Times newspaper



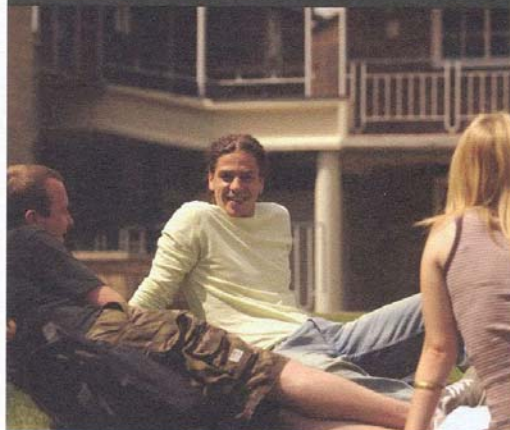
30,000

students (one in five of the
population) live in Oxford.

Your life at Brookes

'...the atmosphere of
one of the world's true
student cities'

*The Virgin Alternative Guide to British
Universities*



25%

of Brookes students
are postgraduates.

4. Queen's University Belfast (Queen's)

POSTGRADUATE PROSPECTUS

1

About this Prospectus

Welcome to Queen's.

Queen's University Belfast is a broadly-based, research-driven university offering an outstanding academic experience. This Prospectus has been designed to help you decide why you should choose to study here.

It is divided into five sections for easy navigation:

- 1 Thinking About Applying?
- 2 A-Z of Research Degree Programmes
- 3 A-Z of Taught Degree Courses
- 4 The Postgraduate Experience
- 5 Queen's and Northern Ireland

Enjoy reading about Queen's University and we hope to see you soon.

Should you need further information, the Admissions and Access Service will be pleased to help:

The Admissions and Access Service
Queen's University Belfast
BT7 1NN
Northern Ireland

Tel: +44 (0)28 9097 2727
Email: admissions@qub.ac.uk
www.qub.ac.uk/ado

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS



Hello. We are honoured you are considering Queen's University Belfast as your destination for postgraduate study.

If you choose Queen's, you will find yourself working in an institution which is a member of the prestigious Russell Group, which is an association of 20 major research-intensive universities in the United Kingdom. This publication should help answer any questions you may have and if not don't hesitate to give us a call.

We look forward to seeing you around campus.

5. The University of Edinburgh (Edinburgh)

The image is a promotional poster for the University of Edinburgh's 2009 postgraduate entry. It features a light blue header with the university's name, 'Postgraduate study', and '2009 Entry Welcome'. Below this, a dark blue section contains the word 'Welcome' in large white letters, followed by two paragraphs of text in a smaller white font. A vertical blue bar on the left side contains the word 'Welcome' and the website 'www.ed.ac.uk'.

The University of Edinburgh Postgraduate study 2009 Entry **Welcome**

2009 Entry

Welcome

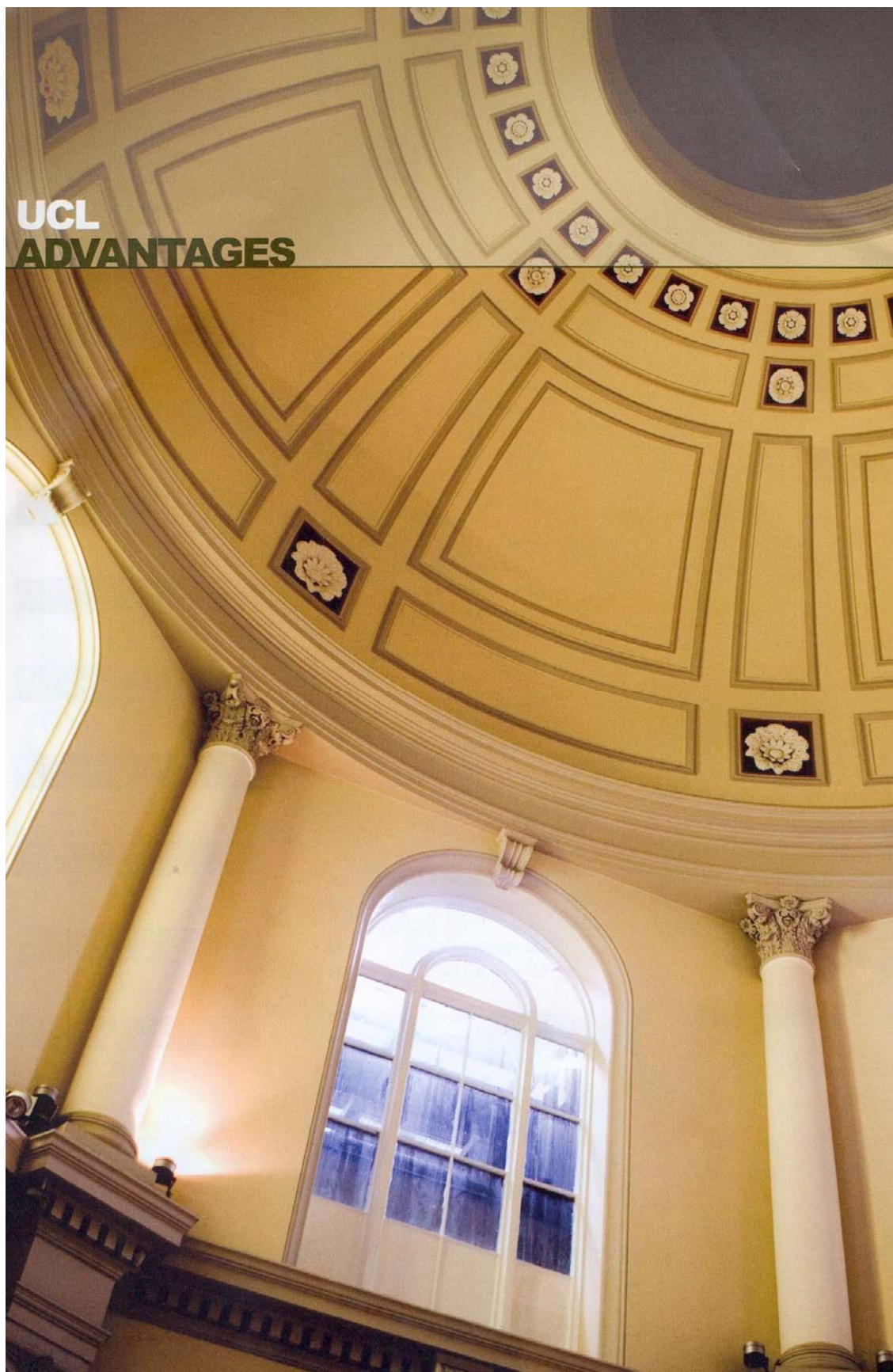
Postgraduate study at the University of Edinburgh is globally recognised as providing you with a truly unique opportunity to work at the highest level, with some of the most influential academics in your chosen field. You will develop specialist skills, unique perspectives and deeper understanding, providing you with all the tools you need to take your career forward, whether it is in industry, academia or beyond.

Whatever your chosen programme of study, we can assure you of the highest quality research opportunities and some exciting and rewarding thinking ahead.

Welcome to Edinburgh.

www.ed.ac.uk

6. UCL (UCL)





Excellence and innovation are core elements of the educational experience at UCL. If you bring ability, commitment and motivation to your graduate studies at UCL, you will be rewarded with intellectual stimulation, personal fulfilment, and a firm foundation from which to achieve your aspirations. You are invited to join the exciting UCL endeavour aimed at improving the intellectual, cultural, social and technological circumstances of the world's peoples.



World-class education

UCL achieves consistently high ranking in league tables, including being ranked ninth in the *Times Higher - QS World University Rankings 2007*.



Research-led scholarship

Eminent, ground-breaking research is being undertaken across all disciplines at UCL, with new discoveries, inventions and insights adding to the world's collective body of knowledge. Practical applications of research are actively pursued – for example, new medicines, better predictions of earthquakes, understanding of historical events and international cultural difference to help resolve disputes and promote social harmony. Discovery and dissemination of knowledge is fundamental to UCL's aims; research findings are used to inform teaching and supervision of graduate students. Students have exceptional opportunities to undertake, or participate in, projects of investigation, experimentation, discovery and development.



Global outlook, global activity

UCL's academic excellence and innovative approach have brought not only international recognition, but also facilitated the development of networks and collaborative ventures at the highest level. In aiming to identify and address the biggest challenges facing the world both in the present and the future, UCL works in co-operation with governments, educational institutions, industrial, professional and corporate organisations across the globe.



A community celebrating diversity and collaboration

UCL's staff and students are drawn from a broad range of national, cultural and social backgrounds, and work across a wide spectrum of academic disciplines.

This contributes to our well-reputed cosmopolitan, dynamic and welcoming atmosphere. Furthermore, it also creates in UCL a forum for the exchange of perspectives, a network for international co-operation, and opportunities to defy traditional academic boundaries and open up collaborative, interdisciplinary pathways which address real-world issues and shape the future.



Foundation for your future

Your graduate degree constitutes an important step on your route to achieving your ambitions. Whatever your plans, study at UCL is designed to equip you not only with the academic knowledge associated with your chosen qualification, but also with skills for life. Vital skills such as organising your ideas and time, analysing information, communicating complex concepts, appreciating and assimilating different perspectives, and applying theory to real-world circumstances are built in to our programmes and supported by training. Such skills are much valued by employers, and UCL offers a wealth of advice and support to prepare you to achieve your personal, academic and professional aims.



London

UCL's location in central London offers outstanding academic, professional and social benefits. Internationally renowned resources, such as the British Library, are within walking distance; our strong links with industrial and professional bodies based in the capital provide insight into practical, contemporary challenges and solutions. The stimulation, resources and events provided by a vast community of academic scholarship and investigation are here to explore and enjoy. Vibrant and exciting, London also offers boundless opportunities for social and leisure activity.



UCL Graduate School

The role of the UCL Graduate School is to ensure high standards of teaching and supervision, to provide support beyond disciplinary boundaries, and to guide strategic developments in graduate education at UCL. The UCL Graduate School is committed to making sure that the quality and relevance of your graduate studies are of the highest level. We aim to ensure that your education as a graduate student at UCL fulfils your needs and expectations, equips you for a successful future, and enables you to make the most of the excitement of graduate studies. The Graduate School provides and directs many initiatives developed to support and enhance your academic and personal development. Examples include the Skills Development Programme; the Research Student Log; Research Scholarships and Research Funds; competitions in which you can present your work to other academics and to the public; provision of dedicated graduate computer and common room areas; and organisation of social and networking events to help you make rewarding academic and social contacts. These activities are described further in this Prospectus and at www.ucl.ac.uk/gradschool

7. University of Oxford (Oxford)

Foreword

Welcome to the University of Oxford Graduate Studies Prospectus for entry in 2009–2010

from Professor Elizabeth A Fallaize,
Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education





We are delighted that you are considering applying for postgraduate study at the University of Oxford. We value our postgraduate students very highly, and we hope that our prospectus will help you answer the questions that you have about applying to us and about the kind of graduate programmes that we have to offer.

The University has an outstanding international reputation for its excellence in research, and we take extremely seriously our work of training the next generation's best researchers and university teachers. We offer an ideal environment for research students, supported by some of the most distinguished scholars and researchers in the world in our departments and faculties, and, at the same time, providing an interdisciplinary college environment in which graduate students from all over the world have a home base and come into contact with other students from a wide variety of backgrounds and interests. At Oxford, graduates are part of a strong and international graduate community, numbering over 6,000, and including students from over 130 countries. The mix of cultural diversity and intellectual rigour is an essential part of Oxford, together with the wide array of other activities in which graduates take part, from athletics and judo to music and drama. Our academic resources are unrivalled, whether you will be making use of the collections of the Bodleian Library, or our museum collections, or the state-of-the-art new Chemistry research laboratory and brain-imaging centre.

The University has more academic staff working in world-class research departments (rated 5* and 5 in the 2001 national Research Assessment Exercise) than any other university in the UK, and received £346m in research income in 2006/7. The University ranked second in the Times Higher Education Supplement World University Rankings in 2007.

Our prospectus, which is also available online at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/postgraduate/, offers an introduction to the courses on offer in the departments and faculties, and also to the colleges and permanent private halls. Once you have decided which course and which college or hall is best for you, other sections of the prospectus will guide you through the application process.

The one, unassailable condition of being accepted for a graduate course at Oxford is evidence of your previous academic excellence, and of your future potential. This is what continues to assure Oxford's place amongst the very best academic institutions in the world, and why we want to encourage applications from excellent students from all kinds of backgrounds.

We look forward to receiving your application, and to helping you with any further questions which you may have.

I wish you every success.

